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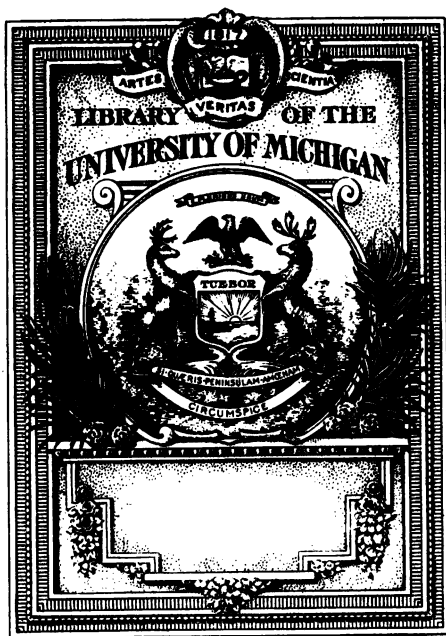
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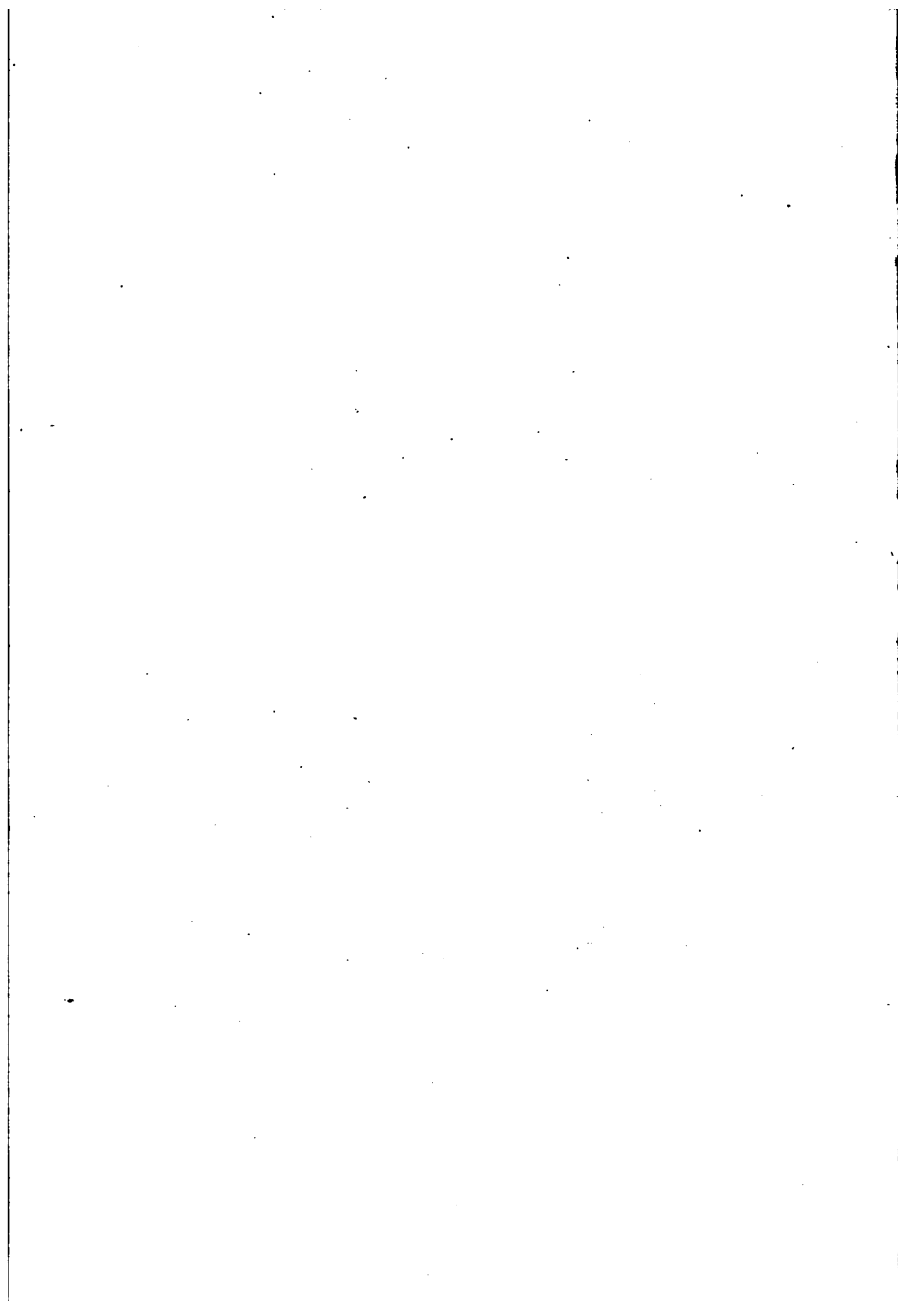
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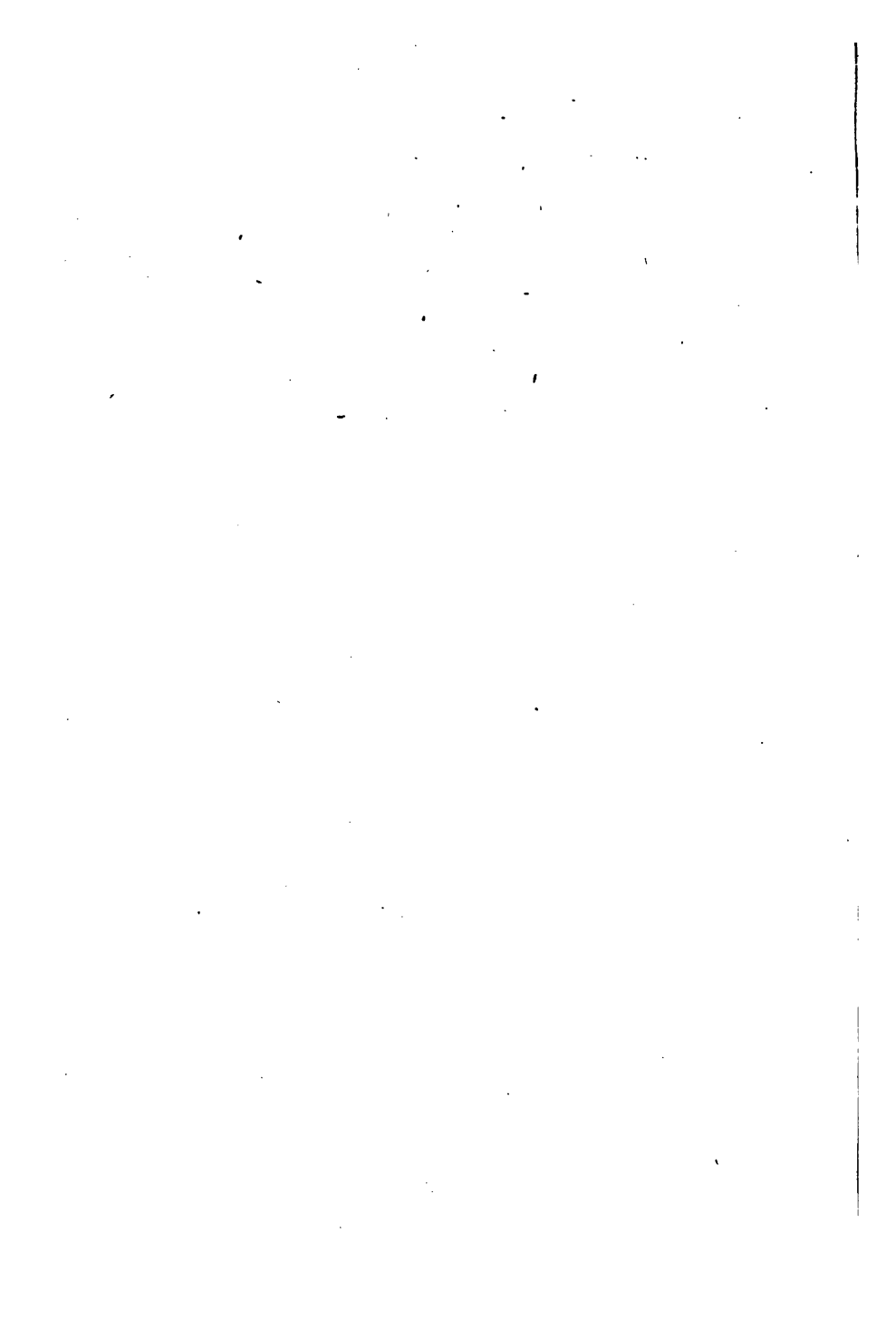
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# IRENICS:

## A SERIES OF ESSAYS

SHOWING

### THE VIRTUAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN

- I. SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.
- II. NATURE AND THE SUPERNATURAL.
- III. THE DIVINE AND THE HUMAN IN SCRIPTURE.
- IV. THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENTS.
- V. CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM.
- VI. DIVINE BENEVOLENCE AND ENDLESS PUNISHMENT.

BY

JAMES STRONG, S.T.D., LL.D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE DREW THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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NEW YORK:  
PHILLIPS & HUNT.  
CINCINNATI:  
WALDEN & STOWE.  
1888.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE essays contained in this volume were originally prepared as lectures on various occasions, and it was not till the most of them had been written that the author himself noticed that they possess a common element and purpose. After so many ages of controversy Christians are at last coming to understand better, not only their own faith and its relations, but also one another's views of it; and thus what may be styled an *anti-polemical* spirit is springing up, which argues well for the dawn of the millennial day of the Prince of Peace. These papers are committed to the public in the hope of promoting this tendency. Being intended for general readers, they have purposely avoided technical detail.

In the first of them the author, while he freely admits the necessity of a fresh readjustment of certain old theological positions to the revelations of modern science and philosophy, yet protests most earnestly against the crypto-rationalism which is so hasty in concluding that the Bible itself is at fault. There are, quite as probably, mistakes on the opposite side, and hence caution and candor are requisite on the part of

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the scientist and philosopher no less than on that of the theologian in their respective pronunciamientos. Especially is it important that each should adhere to his own domain without dictating to the other the concessions which he will demand in departments where he is not an expert. *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, or in plain English, "Mind your own business," is a good motto to keep people out of unprofitable quarrels.

The second essay is an attempt to mediate between the rigid code of natural law and the demand of revelation for a divine intervention, not only occasionally, but at all times. It touches what the writer conceives to be the central point in the prevalent conflict between naturalism and supernaturalism.

The third paper treats of a topic which has not much agitated the religious world until comparatively recent times, but which in these days of re-examination into the foundation of the most cherished beliefs, is assuming very important proportions. It lies at the basis of all just interpretation, and necessarily tinges the complexion, as it likewise affects the validity, of every modern comment on Holy Scripture. It thus enters as a vital constituent into the household of faith, and holds an appropriate place in this series of discussions.

The fourth and most extensive portion of this little book is intended to show that genuine Bible religion has been essentially the same in all ages of the world, and has only differed in its outward form under the various economies. It is offered as a contribution to

Christian apologetics in a line not often pursued. Good people, doubtless, have always felt the truth of the conclusions here reached, but they have not generally apprehended it clearly, nor traced it out particularly.

The fifth of the papers here presented is still more distinctly irenical. The author is aware that in his effort to act as a mediator between two opposite camps he is liable to incur the hostility of both. But he has aimed neither to sacrifice nor to misrepresent either of them. He has no thought of relinquishing Arminianism himself, nor of asking others to give up Calvinism. He is sure that he understands the former quite well, and he has taken his statements of the latter from few but acknowledged authorities. His method is a truly peace-making one. He is satisfied that, as is evinced in the union services now so frequently and successfully held between different denominations, there is common ground enough for all evangelical believers to stand upon together, and that the more closely they come together in this friendly manner the more fully will they be able to fraternize and harmonize with each other.

The last of this series of essays is on a theme which in these latter days especially troubles the peace, not only of theological Christendom at large, but of many pious minds in particular, who find it hard to believe that their non-penitent friends and kindred will be finally lost. If the author shall be found to have offered any relief to such, his effort will not have been in vain. The suggestions on the associated topic of

the future life he hopes will not be deemed inappropriate or unacceptable.

Other cognate themes, such as the difficulties raised by evolutionists and rationalists, would have been appropriate to the connection, but their discussion would have swelled this book beyond its prescribed dimensions. Moreover, they rather belong to polemic than to irenic theology. These and some like topics may eventually form the nucleus of another volume antithetical to the present one.

It will perhaps be occasionally perceived that the same thought is touched upon in more than one place in the course of these lectures, as they were prepared irrespectively of each other; but the repetition will be found to set the illustration in a new light or relation.

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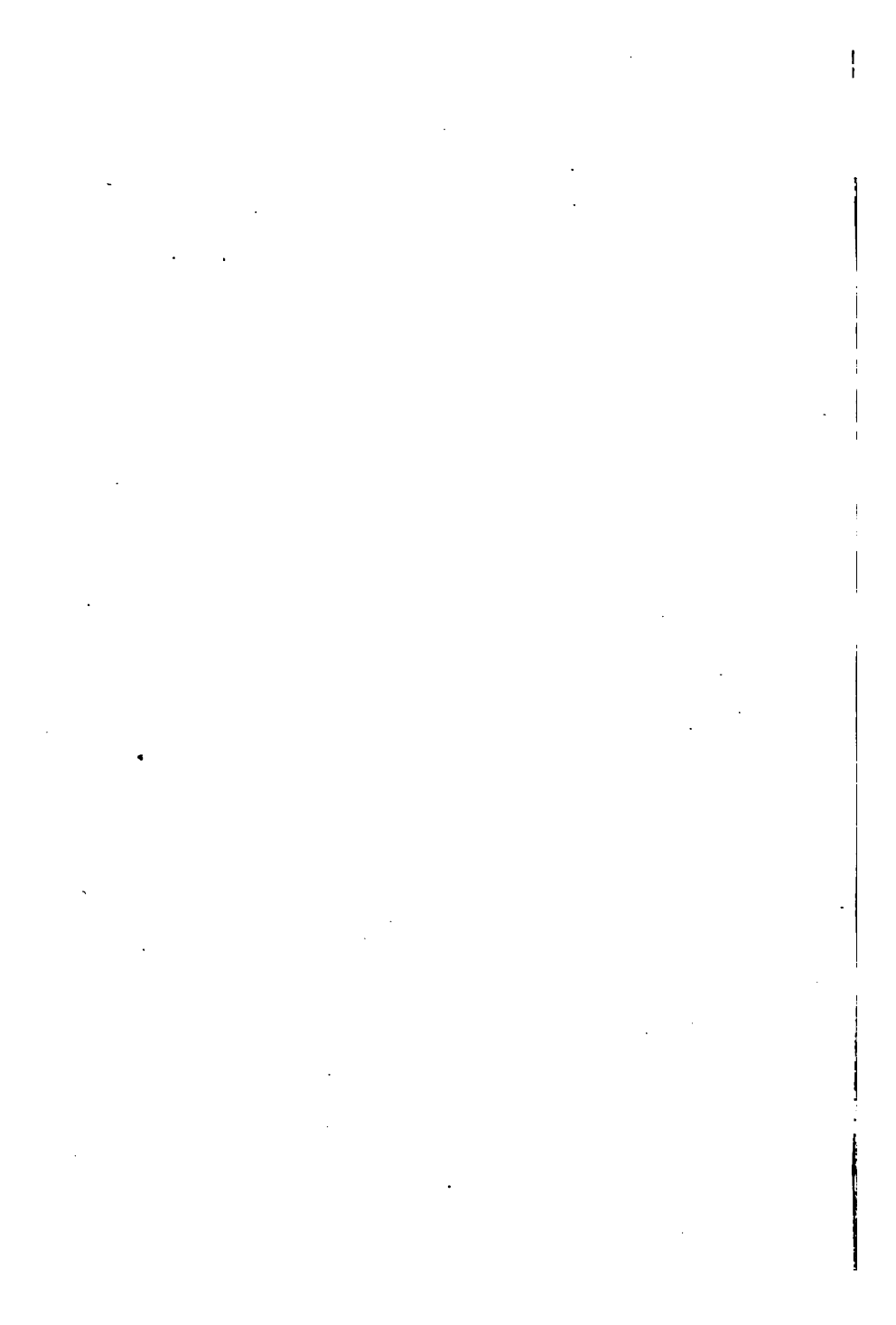
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I R E N I C S.



FIRST ESSAY.



THE ENTIRE TRUTHFULNESS OF THE  
HOLY SCRIPTURES.

# ANALYSIS.

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## I. STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION.

## II. ALLEGED HISTORICAL DISCREPANCIES.

1. Between the various parts of Scripture itself.
2. Supposed contradictions between the sacred and profane historians.

## III. SCIENTIFIC DIFFICULTIES.

1. Geology.
2. The Flood.
3. The Resurrection.
4. Natural History.
5. Difference between scientific and popular statements of truth.

## IV. PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS.

1. Some misapprehension here to be expected.
2. The earlier dispensation necessarily preliminary.
3. Alleged atrocities of Mosaism.
4. Falsehood nowhere countenanced.

## V. CONCLUSION.



THE

## TRUTHFULNESS OF SCRIPTURE.

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THIS position may be stated as a question. Is there any error in the Bible? or, more exactly, thus: Do the writers of the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments anywhere make statements, either by way of assertion or of doctrine, contradictory to well authenticated history, the established deductions of science, or the sound conclusions of philosophy?

This is a question, not of theory, but of fact; and therefore while, on the one hand, theologians are not entitled to argue the negative from the admission of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, on the other hand, modern *savants* are not authorized to assume the affirmative without explicit and satisfactory proof. As the allegations of the latter are somewhat numerous, we here have space to examine only specimens of the more decided ones, which we take up in the order indicated by the above classification.

We begin with alleged *historical* discrepancies. These may be divided into two classes, which we will consider separately.

First, let us take up the variations among the Scripture writers themselves. Rationalists have made a great parade of these, especially of the differences between the several Evangelists' accounts of

our Lord's life and miracles; but these have all been repeatedly reconciled to the satisfaction of reasonable students.

For example, Matthew states that "Jesus went up into a mountain" in order to deliver his memorable sermon, while Luke says that "he came down and stood in the plain;"<sup>1</sup> both which accounts are easily explained by the natural supposition that he took his station on a small plateau part way down the hill. So the account of the curing of the Gadarene demoniac,<sup>2</sup> and of blind Bartimæus,<sup>3</sup> does not contradict the statement that each had a companion.<sup>4</sup> In every trial witnesses are called to supplement one another's testimony, and the truth of none is impeached unless they flatly oppose each other. In the same way the parallel accounts in the Books of Kings and of Chronicles mutually illustrate the history, the more brief and obscure being interpreted by the fuller and more definite, while the minor discrepancies as to dates are evidently due to different modes of computation or to clerical errors. Had these narratives been the work of forgers or knavish copyists we may be sure all such difficulties would have been carefully avoided.

We are fairly entitled to treat in a similar manner those puzzles, such as the genealogy of our Lord,<sup>5</sup> the taxing under Cyrenius,<sup>6</sup> the "second-first" Sabbath,<sup>7</sup> the day of our Lord's last passover, etc.; the means for the full solution of which do not now exist,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 1; Luke vi, 17.

<sup>2</sup> Mark v, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Mark x, 46.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. viii, 28; xx, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. i, 1-17; comp. Luke iii, 23-38.

<sup>6</sup> Luke ii, 2; comp. Acts v, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Luke vi, 1.

although it is clear that they were quite intelligible to the first readers of the Gospels. So, likewise, citations from the Old Testament in the New Testament apparently erroneous, such as that Jesus was to be called a Nazarene,<sup>1</sup> or the passage concerning the thirty pieces of silver attributed to Jeremiah rather than to Zechariah,<sup>2</sup> or the position of the mercy-seat,<sup>3</sup> are due either to corrections of the text, or to some method of quotation or assignment then in vogue, but not familiar with us. Peculiarities of phraseology like these must be judged by the *usus loquendi* of the times, the persons, and the places where they prevailed, and not according to our far-distant notions and habits. Language is valuable only as a vehicle of thought, and is to be interpreted according to the obvious intent of the speaker or writer. That the sacred writers should not be critically exact according to modern occidental standards might, of course, be expected; and hence we must be especially careful to regard rather what they *mean* than to strictly construe what they say. They every-where use terms in the popular and current sense of their day, and they must be understood accordingly. Thus, the single night and the parts of the evening preceding and morning following, during which our Lord lay in the sepulcher, are reckoned after Jewish fashion as three days and three nights.<sup>4</sup> We are therefore not warranted in saying that the sacred writers have committed errors because they have expressed themselves in language which is inaccurate as judged from our

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ii, 23.    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvii, 9.    <sup>3</sup> Heb. ix, 3-5.    <sup>4</sup> Matt. xii, 40.

point of view. The real question at issue is this, Were they mistaken as to the matters of fact which they intended to assert? That they willfully misrepresented the case no sensible or well-informed person nowadays ventures to affirm. That they have actually misstated it, when taken according to what was evidently or probably their true intent, has never yet been clearly shown. That they could not have had an erroneous idea of the subject in hand is certain in some of the most perplexing instances, inasmuch as they were personally cognizant or familiar with them; and the same may therefore, in the absence of counter evidence, be fairly presumed in the rest.

Let us next consider discrepancies between the sacred and profane historians. A host of alleged disagreements of this sort has been arrayed by unfriendly critics, but the careful student, unless he is determined to have a contradiction at all hazards, will find them all amply and satisfactorily disposed of in the various biblical commentaries and dictionaries. The fair presumption in all these cases, as in those under the preceding head, is that the Scripture writers were neither deceivers nor deceived, and that therefore they are implicitly trustworthy. Most of these narratives relate to transactions of which they were directly cognizant, and as to the rest, of course, they must be understood only as representing the opinions of their age and nation. Whether they are relating their personal experience, or what was immediately or mediately revealed to them, or what they learned from testimony or mere report, can usually be gathered

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without much difficulty from their own account ; and it is sufficient for us to claim—what has not been successfully gainsaid—that in each case they have given an honest and true report. In meeting objections to their credibility, we are fairly entitled to every explanation that can reasonably be urged in their favor ; and they cannot be justly convicted of error unless the contradiction is of a downright and absolute character. Many, if not all, of those adduced are, on the contrary, merely inferential and indirect. They most frequently relate to obscure questions of chronology, geography, or archæology, about which the learned world is still, and perhaps ever will be, itself in dispute. For example, one of the most noteworthy of the hitherto unsolved problems is the date of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah, which the Bible explicitly states was in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah's reign,<sup>1</sup> corroborating that location by coincident circumstances, so that it is impossible to amend the text, which indeed must have been written by Isaiah on the spot. But this seems to be in direct conflict with the lately exhumed cuneiform annals of Sargon and Sennacherib, as well as with the newly read hieroglyphic accounts of the contemporaneous Tirhakah. Any one, however, who has given much attention to Assyrian and Egyptian chronology well knows the uncertainty of the decipherment of names in these lists ; and the whole subject is too recent and unsettled to allow any final judgment in the case. No doubt the difficulty will in due time be

<sup>1</sup> 2 Kings xviii, 13 ; Isa. xxxvi, 1.

cleared up, as others have been; and in any case the biblical statement is more likely to be correct than the others, for we positively know that the latter are sometimes erroneous.

We turn now to *scientific* difficulties. We here tread upon the great battle-ground of modern theology. We propose, however, not directly to enter the lists as combatants, but rather to survey the field from a safe point of view as spectators. In fact, theology, as we hope to show, really has no controversy with science. Earnest and candid expounders of the Bible welcome light from every source, and are willing, if need be or if they may, to be taught even by enemies of the truth. Let us glance rapidly at some of the alleged contradictions in the scientific line.

The first chapters of the book of Genesis have been the great bone of contention in this strife; not merely because, lying as they do at the threshold of all revealed and all discovered knowledge, they are of universal and imperishable interest; but because from their extreme antiquity they really antedate all historical and scientific verification. Yet both parties have been eager to read between the lines of this very laconic and general account the details of their own favorite opinions. Thus theologians have been wont to assume that Moses asserts the formation of the entire universe, or at least of our own globe, with all its internal and superficial furniture, in six literal days; while scientists at present, in the main, contend for an immense period of astronomical and geological eras, which they claim that they read in the nebular

reductions, the rocky strata, and the vital evolutions of the past. But a close inspection of the phraseology of Moses shows that he has not committed himself to either of these opposite opinions. He simply states, in verse 1, the fact of God's creation of our own planet and its solar system substantially as they now exist, without specifying any particulars as to the time, mode, or order of the process; and in the following verses he narrates successive stages of a subsequent special creation of the present vegetable and animal tribes, either over the earth generally, or possibly in a particular locality only. The Bible and modern science thus appear to be discoursing upon two entirely different subjects, and cannot possibly contradict each other. Let biblical and scientific expositors, therefore, each go on their own way without quarreling. The questions of the antiquity and unity of the human race upon the earth are, indeed, more explicitly touched upon in the Bible; but modern science has hitherto adduced nothing adequate to overthrow the biblical testimony. Presumptions to the contrary, it is true, have been raised in some quarters by certain phenomena; but these admit of so ready an explanation on other grounds, and are rebutted by so many other facts, that scientists at large still hold fast to the opinion that man is of comparatively recent origin, and must have sprung from a single family.

The universality of Noah's flood as to the surface of the globe, although, we admit, the first inference from the biblical account, is found, on a closer

examination, not to be necessarily intended by its language; and a consideration of its uselessness and impracticability for the mere purpose of drowning a few thousands in a particular locality, induced expositors to limit its prevalence long before the modern scientific objections were thought of.

The doctrine of the survival of the soul after death, and of the resurrection of the human body, are coming more and more to be seen to be not only not incompatible with physiological science, but to be almost necessary deductions from psychological and metaphysical reasoning, even apart from revelation. If the miraculous element be admitted into nature—and hard facts demand its occasional intervention, as well as its primal impulse—all difficulty on physical grounds vanishes from these problems of the future world. The imperceptible but frequent renewal of the material organism actually furnishes a striking illustration of the continuity of identity in the midst of apparent dissolution and atomic change.

But it is said that certain specific statements of Scripture are shown by science to be false. For instance, in natural history, the coney and the hare are classed with the ruminants,<sup>1</sup> whereas in fact they have no cud; and the ant with non-hibernating insects,<sup>2</sup> whereas in truth it lies torpid all winter. Now, we scorn to take refuge, as many interpreters do, in our uncertainty as to the animals really designated, and our ignorance of their exact habits in the East. We accept the issue squarely, and maintain

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xi, 5, 6; Deut. xiv, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. vi, 6-8; xxx, 25.



that in these, as in all other statements, the Scripture writers give us a correct account of an actual phenomenon, although their descriptions are not couched in scientific terms. This last, we of course, have no right to expect of them, for it would have been an anachronism and unintelligible to their readers; and hence we constantly waive that demand as one of the well-established principles of biblical exegesis hinted at above. The question again is: What do they mean to assert? Do they intend to teach, as a matter of information, the scientific peculiarities of the creatures in question? Evidently not; for they assume these peculiarities as the basis of what they really do set out to prescribe or inculcate. Every body knew just as much about the habits of these animals as they did themselves, and, of course, they did not pretend to instruct any one, or to vouch for any thing in this respect; yet they do state what is substantially true, although not exactly expressed according to our ideas of scientific terminology. In the case of the hare, for example, they undoubtedly refer to the constant motion of the lips or mouth, which *seems* like chewing the cud, and is a habitual characteristic of the creature. In this classification Moses simply reflects the opinion of those whom he addressed, and showed his good sense by not going into the pedantry of correcting that impression by a learned quibble upon rumination. This method of accommodation to the mental associations of hearers and readers is a constant law with the sacred speakers and writers, not excepting our Lord himself, who

was omniscient. Their language is always *optical*, that is, in accordance with the exterior, or apparent, phenomena, and they wisely refrain from going behind the scenes into the occult properties of things that they describe. But this is not to commit an error: they were not mistaken as to the facts which they meant to state; nor do they use language which, when properly interpreted, conveys a false impression. If their hearers or readers already had an impression scientifically erroneous in some respects, they were not bound to correct that impression, provided it did not interfere with the purpose or truth which they had in view. Popular language always uses this liberty, but it is not therefore chargeable with untruth. Let us illustrate this, for it is an important, though seemingly minute, point. Take a still plainer example, famous in the history of ecclesiastical dogmatism *versus* intelligent discovery. The Bible positively affirms that *the sun rises*,<sup>1</sup> and common folks every-where say the same thing—almanacs included! Yet modern science informs us that this is not precisely true; the sun does not move; it is the rotation of the earth that produces this optical delusion. How silly would it be to charge such language on that account with error. It states a substantial *fact*, but not in scientific language. That is all; and such are the so-called mistakes of the sacred writers. They begin with the merely *scenic* representation of creation in Genesis, and they end with the visions of the Apocalypse. Every thing is

<sup>1</sup> Psalm civ, 22.

described just as it would appear to an ordinary beholder, without any attempt to express the interior or philosophical principles. This may be unscientific, but it is not therefore untrue. It is the highest exercise of common sense.

At this point, perhaps, the objector will still urge, But is it not evident, or at least quite probable, that the Psalmist in the above case actually did believe that the sun really moves over the earth? Suppose he did. We care not what might have been his personal explanation of the phenomenon to which he refers, nor whether he had any explanation at all of it to offer or to hold. So long as he does not state his views on that point, if he had any, it would be gross injustice to charge him with error on the subject. What he does say is positively true in a very plain and important sense; and we have no business to inject philosophical particulars between and among his words, and then make him responsible for *our* additions. Precisely so with regard to Moses's knowledge and opinion as to the rumination of the coney and hare, or Solomon's as to the hibernation of the ant. Whether they had actually studied the habits of these creatures in these respects or not, is immaterial; it may fairly be presumed they had not. But what of that? It only shows that they were transparently honest in their language. But even had they been as thoroughly posted on those points as modern scientists demand of them, it would nevertheless have been most egregious folly if they had broached such novel or unknown theories in the midst of ceremonial and

moral prescriptions. They simply conformed to the ordinary views entertained by their fellows on these subjects, and used them in a popular way for a different and ulterior purpose. They certainly did not intend to vouch for these particular aspects of their statements, and if they could be cross-questioned to-day, they most assuredly would say so.. What they meant to aver was the fact of certain phenomena, which, in popular terminology, ranked those animals in the category named; and this was literally true. Further the deponents said not.

Let us look into this whole matter a little more closely. Science is simply systematized knowledge, and therein it differs from popular or general information. Common people observe phenomena, and thus ascertain facts. Scientists classify these facts, trace their relations, and thus discover the laws underlying the phenomena. But the latter process is one of theory, tested by experiment. It begins with a hypothesis, for induction—the Baconian method—is nothing more than this; and if the hypothesis satisfactorily explains all the facts in the case, this is called an established principle of science. For example, the Copernican system has superseded the Ptolemaic, merely because it better tallies with the observations made upon the heavenly bodies; but both are equally pure suppositions at the outset. Now, every one can see that such conclusions do not alter or enlarge the facts one particle. These are precisely the same to the scientific and to the unscientific man; they are only viewed in a different light

and with different associations. The biblical writers, of course, having no scientific notions or stand-point after the Baconian school, ignore its nomenclature, and express themselves in the plain language of fact or sensible phenomena. They broach no theories, they employ no technical terms; they confine themselves to actual things in their phenomenal forms. This is a universal rule with them. Hence they seem to disagree with science whenever its rigid canon of verbal precision is applied to them, for, of course, their vocabulary is different; but the dispute is about words only, while the things meant are identically the same. The sacred writers, in scholastic phrase, if you please, use solecisms in grammar, inelegancies in rhetoric, the *argumentum ad hominem* in logic, an unscientific terminology throughout; for such was their vernacular; but they never fall into error as to matter-of-fact intended to be conveyed. We challenge their conviction here. They stand impregnable on this granite foundation of all true science, and are independent of the artificial superstructure of modern hypothesis.

It will be observed that we have not sought to evade responsibility, in the above controversy, by an ingenious device of semi-rationalistic interpreters, namely, that as the sacred writers only profess to teach moral or *religious* truths, they must not be held to accuracy on other matters. This escape is fallacious; for in the first place, as we shall presently see, they are often charged with moral and religious blunders likewise; and secondly, if they make his-

torical and other mistakes, we have no good reason for confidence in them anywhere. Indeed, they do pretend to teach a great deal besides morals and religion, although we grant their instruction is all subsidiary to these ends. They set out to give an account of every thing essentially relating to human probation, involving matters-of-fact in a thousand fields: life, death; this world and the next; history, poetry, arts, politics, human and divine rights—crossing the path of science at every turn. If the Bible does not, at the bottom and core, when rightly understood, agree with sound science, as well as with general history, it must and ought to cease to be a trustworthy guide for human life and destiny. The interests involved are too precious to be committed to any precarious bark in this long and eventful voyage. A single treacherous plank will hazard the entire cargo. *Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.*

No! the much-bruited "conflict between science and religion" turns out, when carefully scrutinized, to be only a disagreement between particular theories of particular scientists and particular interpretations of particular passages of Scripture. The main body of scientific men are as firm believers in Christianity as ever; and science has no warmer votaries than are to be found among Christian believers. True science was never more closely wedded to genuine religion than in the present age.

Let us now consider the *philosophical* problems that have been drawn into the controversy. Under this head we include the social, ethical, and meta-

physical contradictions or inconsistencies alleged against Scripture. *A priori* we might have expected to find such difficulties in the Bible. A book, however divine its origin, unless miraculously indited and preserved in every stage of its descent through human channels and imperfect instruments, must necessarily partake of the fallibility in form and structure that belongs to all earthly things. The sublime topics of which it treats only enhance this liability; its momentous themes but expose it to being less readily comprehended; and its supernatural elements have been the greatest stumbling-block to its reception. It has opposed the prejudices and passions of mankind in every period, and its venerable antiquity has been far from screening it from the keenest criticism in this bold and mercenary age. It still abides the test, and, despite the sneer of the carnal skeptic, it serves as the bulwark and touchstone of the purest virtue and intelligence that the world has ever seen. There must, therefore, be some sophistry lurking in the philosophical objections brought against it, or it could never thus have revolutionized for good the civilization, the morals, and the literature of the best part of mankind. The practical religion of the Bible is its ample vindication. Let us briefly examine, however, some of its alleged errors in this department.

The failure of the probation instituted in Eden, as confessedly those of the antediluvians and the Abrahamidæ, punished respectively by the expulsion, the deluge, and the exile, are not inconsistent with the divine perfections when explained by the apostle,

(especially in the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews,) as preparatory stages to the superseding of law by the economy of grace. So in the details, blood-revenge, polygamy, and slavery were for a time tolerated—as sin at large is still permitted—until the principles of Christianity should silently eradicate them. In short, the Old Testament can only be regarded as a scaffolding or portico to the grand and symmetrical temple of the New, and all its institutions and incidents must be explained by that reference. When thus viewed they are found to be homogeneous, but the correspondence is ever that of development, progress, improvement, not tame identity; yet true piety is discovered to be the same under all the dispensations, whether the worship be by direct interlocution, by patriarchal altar and priestly mediation, or by spiritual communion. Adam, Enoch, Noah, Job, Moses, David, Daniel, all along the ages, walked with God in essentially the same intercourse that Paul and John and modern saints hold with the Father of spirits. The faith that truly saved was never in the bleeding type and ceremonial acts, but in the one Lamb of God and the consecration of the heart.

But from this general view let us descend to the examination of the so-called atrocities of the Jewish administration—such, for example, as the extermination of the Canaanites, and the execution of Achan's family. These, we find, were judicial acts performed by Jehovah's command; and as such they have their sole vindication. The right of the Almighty to



inflict punishment by whatever means he sees fit can only be impugned by those who ignore his agency in the lightning's bolt, the earthquake's shock, and the pestilence's stroke. Butler has irrefragably proved at least the *analogy* of the divine procedure in all such cases. Earthly devastations are always indiscriminate; national retributions often overtake innocent associates, but the infliction ends with this life, and is a part of probation.

The failings, the sins, the occasionally gross errors, of Bible saints, are often held up to ridicule as flaws in the record; but they are rather evidences of its impartiality; for these are never apologized for, much less defended; and are only pointed out as warnings to others. There is but one perfect example set up for imitation: the Lord Jesus challenges all to convict his life or character of any fault.<sup>1</sup> Criticism is dumb in his presence.

We close, somewhat abruptly, this discussion, which has run to greater length than we expected, and yet is by no means exhaustive, by a brief allusion to two marked instances in the Old Testament and one in the New, which have sometimes been adduced as plainly countenancing duplicity. Jael is applauded for her assassination of Sisera;<sup>2</sup> but it must be borne in mind that, however treacherous her act may at first seem when viewed in the light of Bedouin hospitality, it involved the violation of no pledge on her part. She neither invited him nor promised him safety in her tent: he entered, at his own risk, the

<sup>1</sup> John viii, 48.

<sup>2</sup> Judges v, 24-31.

harem of one known to be on friendly terms with his enemies; and she availed herself of the opportunity thus providentially thrown in her way of doing what she regarded as a chivalrous and patriotic deed. *Leges silent inter arma.* The morality of warfare itself is a question for which the text ought not to be held responsible.

The case of the old Bethelite prophet who, under false representation, persuaded the prophet of Judah to accompany him home, to the latter's ruin,<sup>1</sup> is of a similar character, but less difficult; for the sacred text, so far from commending the deception, plainly characterizes it as "lying,"<sup>2</sup> and the sequel clearly puts the divine ban upon the compliance. It only illustrates what the history of Balaam had long before shown, that prophecy was sometimes vouchsafed to unworthy organs, as the New Testament also admits.<sup>3</sup>

The last instance which we cite is the behavior of the risen Lord toward the two disciples on the way to Emmaus,<sup>4</sup> in which some have imagined a deliberately planned piece of equivocation. But all the expressions used on his part are those of concealment simply, and not of positive misleading. There was no deception in his merely remaining *incognito*. A lie is a direct *misstatement*, and not the omission of an act, such as silence or latency. Otherwise, truthfulness would require us always to expose our secrets to every person. We may evade a question without falsehood, and we are under no obligation to unde-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xiii.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vii, 22, 23; 1 Cor. xiii, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Verse 18.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv, 13-32.

ceive the erroneous impressions which another may receive from our reticence. The Almighty is constantly misjudged as conniving at wickedness because he does not at once reveal himself against it.<sup>1</sup> Like Jesus, on the above occasion, he bides his time, but never leaves those who have to do with him under a finally wrong idea of his character.

We conclude, therefore, by repeating that the conscientious Christian is justified in being scrupulously jealous of any flaw, not only in the Saviour's career, but likewise in the entire tenor of the inspired records. A single *faux pas* blasts the fairest fame.<sup>2</sup> Admit but one *bona fide* error in Holy Scripture, and you will in vain seek to extenuate it as secular, trivial, or human. The credit of the book is irrevocably gone. There are no venial sins here. No one can tell how soon that very point may be found important, nay basal, to some dangerous heresy in faith or practice. The creed of Protestantism is the unadulterated Word of God.

<sup>1</sup> Psalm l, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. x, 1.



**SECOND ESSAY.**

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**THE SUPERNATURAL IN NATURE.**

# ANALYSIS.

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## I. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

## II. SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT IN PHYSICS.

1. The basis of matter uncognizable.
2. The essence of spirit equally unknown.
3. Yet we have no doubt of the existence of either.
4. They possess a common element.
5. They actually combine.
6. Their bond of connection.
7. Their radical difference nevertheless.

## III. DIVINE INTERVENTION.

1. In Creation.
  - a. Matter a channel for Divine action.
  - b. Yet we must not confound these.
  - c. The original *fact* necessarily abnormal.
2. In Providence.
  - a. Not a violation of law.
  - b. Nor a conflict in government.
  - c. Secrecy of the Divine movements.
  - d. Divine influences through the mind.
3. In Miracles.
  - a. A direct contravention of natural law by Almighty power.
  - b. The present a faithless generation.
  - c. Mystery every-where enshrouds us.
  - d. The great lesson of faith.
  - e. Christianity a revealed religion.

## THE SUPERNATURAL IN NATURE.

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THE term *nature* is somewhat difficult to define exactly and yet comprehensively. Etymologically it signifies the character or congeries of qualities with which any thing is originally and essentially endowed, but by common consent it is usually taken to designate specifically the totality of objects recognized by the senses and forming the realm of physical science. It is with this import that we purpose here to employ it. The *supernatural*, therefore, in contradistinction, would properly denote all being or reality outside of this department, and would thus include mind in all its gradations and manifestations. In this simple and palpable demarcation we lay the basis for the discussion which we meditate, and upon it we hope to rest some irrefragable conclusions. Before we begin, however, to build our theological structure, we need to fortify logically, as well as to scrutinize metaphysically, the fundamental distinction, especially as we aim to trace out and carry up these parallel walls of existence in their harmonious and co-ordinate relations as a home for practical and permanent occupation.

With regard to *matter*, which is the obvious, if not the exclusive, object of cognition through the senses,

we find, upon close examination and reflection, that perception affords us only a knowledge of its properties and relations; but that its essence or inner self eludes our most searching investigation. Its real character and constitution, whether atomic or continuous, whether elementally or accidentally diverse, whether infinitely diffused or limited in space, are still, after ages of speculation and experiment, an unsolved problem and a subject of dispute. Why one particle is white or heavy or fragrant or sonorous or sapid, and another of precisely opposite character, we are just as ignorant as ever. We touch or smell or taste or look at a body, and we experience certain sensations, from which we *infer* a corresponding quality in the object of sense; and that is all we learn respecting the thing itself. We hear a sound, but the source whence it proceeds, and the nature of the sounding body, we must ascertain by other means.

Precisely so is it with regard to *spirit*, which constitutes the other great branch of entity, but which we apprehend by an entirely different faculty, namely, consciousness. We have interior intuitions, feelings, volitions; we exercise memory, fancy, passion, determination, or the like; and we positively know that we experience these mental states, which we are sure are different in character and origin from those excited by outward objects; and thus we come, by a process of deduction, to speak of our soul or mind or reason or heart, or whatever else we may call our inner or spiritual self, as a distinct being. For a time



we may have some difficulty in distinguishing our own bodies from our minds, but just as the infant, which at first will not wince or blink at the finger pointed toward its eye, not yet being aware of the difference between the within and the without, yet very soon learns the fact of exteriority and distance ; so we, by testing one sense by another, perceive the *me* and the *not-me*, and by comparing our physical with our purely mental impressions we arrive with equal facility at the distinction between the two co-ordinate elements of our personality. But just as before, we still have only revelations of the faculties or qualities of the mind or spirit, and not any intimation of its real substance or constituent nature, so to speak. Indeed, in describing or naming it, we are obliged to use even more vague terms than in the case of matter, and are chiefly wont to characterize it as being the opposite of the latter. By extending this comparison to other persons, we perceive that they exhibit signs of similar mental states, and we therefore infer that they likewise have a mind, soul, or spirit. In short, the sum of all positive or absolute human knowledge consists in the possession or acquisition of certain mental conditions, called sensations or perceptions when they relate to the physical world, and intuitions or conceptions when they spring from the inner being ; and the remainder of our personal knowledge is made up of the deductions, inferences, or conclusions which arise or follow from these premises.

But this latter information, although thus second-

ary and indirect, is not less certain or trustworthy than the primary or ultimate mental acts upon which it rests. This principle we desire especially to emphasize and illustrate, as it is basal to the whole fabric of human belief. The simple fact is, that we are so constituted that in our normal and sane condition we cannot avoid drawing these inferences, deductions, or conclusions, any more than we can help feeling cold, etc., or realizing our own consciousness. Every science, even rigid mathematics, has its axioms, which are self-asserting and indisputable. So here, whatever may be our skeptical theories, we are compelled in actual life to assume the correctness of our convictions on two points, first, that outward, that is, material, things (involving our own bodies) are really as they are represented by our senses, and secondly, that our spiritual being is accurately portrayed by our interior consciousness. This, it will be perceived, covers more than the mere claim of the *existence* of some entity in which these qualities respectively reside, or from which these influences spring; it includes the certainty that both matter and mind are *such* as they seem severally to be; and this, because of their ascertained difference in character and results, leads to the equally sure and inevitable conclusion that they essentially differ in nature from each other. We are thus effectually guarded against the danger of falling into either of the two errors to which purely speculative philosophy has ever been prone, but neither of which common sense has ever been able practically to carry out, namely, the sup-

planting of matter by spirit, or spirit by matter, or, what is tantamount to both, the confusion of one with the other. Any individual who in actual life proceeds upon a neglect or denial of the maxims legitimately flowing from this distinction, and pursues his incredulity into the details of social, domestic, and political affairs, will immediately be accounted irrational, if not demented, as surely as if he refused to recognize the objectivity of matter or the subjectivity of mind. His fellow-men, in self-defense if not in humanity, will be compelled to shut him up in a prison or the mad-house. Such Pyrrhonism has never been epidemic. These two axioms, consciousness and perception, which ultimately rest on the common ground of the mind's confidence in its own action, are the twin bases of the arch that supports all human knowledge, and with the overthrow or denial of either of them the whole fabric necessarily topples into ruin. Theism itself is but the key-stone at the top, and religion is the iris that plays about the mystic bow.

After this preliminary discussion, which has reduced both nature and the supernatural (defined as above) to the same plane of evidence, but has established their constitutional difference, we once more approach the central problem already hinted at, namely, the radical character of the attributes of being; not with the expectation of clearly unfolding its essence, but for the purpose of mediating, if possible, between the contrarieties by a closer inspection of their action. Matter and mind do certainly

coalesce; they actually unite in the human subject himself. There has always, therefore, been suspected a *tertium quid*, or connecting link, between them; but this, as universal science and philosophy testify, cannot be found in the supposition of a third or intermediate substance. It must reside, not, as often imagined, in either one or the other element exclusively, but in some property common to them both. How this community originated, whence it was derived, or by whom endowed, are questions of deep interest which we will consider presently. Theism assigns it to the omnific Creator as a type of himself, the first great cause. It is sufficient for us here to accept the fact, and expound it as we find it.

The clew out of this labyrinth lies in the very fact already stated, that both physical and spiritual substances alike possess these qualities, which, although various, yet are sufficiently homogeneous in some one respect to serve as a bond of union between them. This homogeneity consists in another fact, not sufficiently apprehended by scientists and philosophers, namely, that the qualities or properties, so called, are really powers or faculties which operate either actively or passively, and give rise to all the influences, changes, and movements, whether in the material or the immaterial sphere. For example, cohesion and gravitation are names for two forms of force universally present in and operative upon physical bodies, and constituting an essential feature of their existence. So of all the other properties, such as inertia, which is but the power of resistance measured by the rule

that "action and reaction are equal." In like manner thought and emotion are but varying forms of action on the part of the same soul, and will is still more palpably its executive function. Now as chemical combinations are the result of the balance and intercommunication of elective affinities residing in the various particles of different kinds of matter, so we are helped to see how substances differing even so widely as matter and mind may combine and co-operate by reason of the assimilative force of their respective activities. We will illustrate still more distinctly: The will of the living being moves one of its limbs. This every-day occurrence involves the entire mystery in question. How is the act effected? The will, that is, the mind, has no physical power in itself, but it has the ability to call to its aid the nervous influence which produces the muscular action. It is not necessary for us to pursue the inquiry to its scientific or anatomical or biological depths. The popular statement we have given of the process is sufficient to demonstrate the capacity of co-action between spirit and matter, and, indeed, the fact is patent to every observer. True, an apparatus is necessary as a medium, and that is equally the case in every instance of the communication of force. A man moves his hand by means of his vital organism, and through this he acts upon another body, whether living or non-living. Just so a non-living object impinges upon another, be it alive or not, only by some mechanism however simple. A stone never leaves its bed upon the mountain-side, nor does a drop of

water fall from the sky, without the intervention of some terrene or aërial machinery which dislodges it; yet its own gravity alone really brings it down.

The *vinculum* between mind and matter, which is substantially the *nexus* of the supernatural with nature, may be still further illustrated by the spiritual element discoverable even in inorganic substances. We speak of the "laws of nature," which are, in fact, only the uniform action of the fixed properties or powers resident, as we have seen, in matter itself. But these, as we have likewise seen, are not the very substance to which we attribute them, but something theoretically, although not actually, separable from it. Now, if we analyze this distinction closely we shall perceive that the so-called laws or powers are a truly supernatural element. They bear the essential marks of spirit, freedom of action only excepted. They evince design; they concur or antagonize but to produce order and harmony; they are the vehicle and exponent of force, which will-power only can generate; they are ethereal and versatile, (especially in the case of the so-called imponderables, being, in fact, nothing more than varied forms of vibration,) but they are perpetual as matter itself, however dormant at times. Nevertheless they are not spirit, but they are surely its offspring, or exercise, or impress. Their origin we do not further discuss for the present. We call special attention, however, to two facts, namely, on the one hand, their obvious and paramount control of brute matter, showing that they are in a legitimate sense supernatural—in some cases (as in that of

"the vital force,") even setting aside the laws of inorganic chemistry ; and, on the other hand, we note their evident subordination and subserviency to the functions of true and proper mind, as this not only shows their derivative character, but will guide us in our subsequent investigations. In one word, spirit *employs* the natural powers of matter in order to accomplish its own behests.<sup>1</sup>

This last summary statement indicates an important difference between the acts of mind and those of matter. The latter are always blind and necessary, while the former are intelligent and contingent. This follows, of course, from the nature of the case, and is in accordance with general experience, convictions, and ethics. Through this door, opening into the avenue of free agency—the only real agency—we see our way out of the misty region of metaphysics which we have been treading, into the clear and solid arena of theological exposition on the most important, yet difficult, topic that has universally agitated the religious world, namely, divine interposition. We will confine our attention for the remainder of this paper to three aspects of this main theme, namely, original creation, special providence, and miraculous attestation.

*Creation* being, like infinity, omniscience, and so forth, an exclusively divine attribute, we can form no adequate conception of it : all that we are able to do is to assist human thought by relieving the term

<sup>1</sup> *Law* is usually defined as "a fixed mode of action." I would rather call it *the expression of a sovereign will uniformly executed*.

of some of its accessory difficulties. Foremost among these is the amazing paradox that the absolute, the perfect, the all-comprehending One should or could project out of himself any thing finite, or in any measure independent, and especially any actuality so dissimilar to himself as matter. Hence, ancient philosophers generally, and some moderns, have attributed eternity to physical substance, not observing that this is virtually to exclude God from his own creation. For if matter be not his own proper creature, it cannot be under his control; and the difficulty of forging a link of connection between it and him is immeasurably enhanced by this hypothesis. When, however, as we have done above, we view matter as but the organ, vehicle, or implement of divine power, we render the idea of creation more reasonable, if not more conceivable. Matter was created for the purpose of manifesting more fully the divine perfections, and, therefore, constitutes at once a sphere and an apparatus for the operations of the infinite Spirit and of other spirits. What range or field of action the angels had previously, if indeed they were created before matter, we cannot imagine; nor need we trouble ourselves to inquire, since we know too little of their constitution to be able to guess what would be appropriate. A similar remark applies to other disembodied spirits, such as the dead prior to the resurrection. But living human beings and, in a more limited degree, animals are furnished by their vital organism with the means of appropriating to their own purposes the forces with which matter is



endowed, and thus of extending their area of action through and beyond their own persons. The reservoir of power, so to speak, is in God; but creatures become its distributing agencies. Deity is readily supposed to have the capacity of immediate connection with the influences of which he is the fountain-head. This statement, we say, helps our human conceptions, although it cannot pretend to be a radical explanation. One thing at least it clearly conserves, namely, the perpetual and universal supremacy of Godhead.

On the other hand, let us not fall into the error of regarding physical or mental phenomena as merely and directly the exercise of God's personal functions, for this would be pantheism. The properties of matter and the faculties of spirit are truly an endowment, and not simply a deposit nor a casual acquirement, but a permanent and indispensable characteristic. They are incorporated into the constitution of the subject, which is then allowed as well as empowered to exert them in accordance with its order of being—man freely, lower animals instinctively, organic matter (whether animal or vegetable) according to peculiar methods, and dead matter (as we have seen) chemically and mechanically. Each of these orders of existence has its well-defined sphere of action, which it cannot transcend, but within which an endless variety of combinations may take place, modified to a certain degree by the voluntary action of some of the subjects or agents. All of them, however, whether consciously or not, are still and ever using only the power originally derived from God and maintained by him. But

this is, in an important sense, their own power when once bestowed and applied ; an important sense, we say, philosophically and practically for all, but morally of course only for man, who alone has an ethical and self-determining faculty. Each makes, to use another figure, a draft upon the divine resources, and each is honored in proportion to its dignity.<sup>1</sup>

We come now to the nucleus of creationism by the question, How, when, and where in this scheme does God interfere, or wherein can he be said to interfere

<sup>1</sup> A refined form of idealistic pantheism, properly denominated *phenomenalism*, consists in maintaining the absolute subjectivity of the impressions received (through sensation and perception) from external things, and denying their objective reality, or at least its probability. This position, if carried out to its legitimate consequences, would end in utter skepticism. For, it should be noted, we have no more substantial reason for believing in our own existence, on the ground of the consciousness of internal experience, (whether of exterior perception or interior intuition,) than we have for affirming the reality of the objects of sense. In either case the knowledge is purely a law of our own mental action. We spontaneously infer each from the phenomena cognized, the data in both cases being strictly internal ; but the one referred to an inward cause and the other to an outward. We are so constituted that we cannot help drawing the conclusion or inference. We are compelled to believe as a primary axiom that thinking implies a thinker, and equally so that perception implies not only a perceiver, but also an object perceived. If one sense temporarily misleads us, we have no resource but to ascertain and correct our error by another sense. We are as firmly assured as ever that there is no actual deception or fallacy. No phenomena of dreaming; color-blindness, and other illusions ever shake our confidence in the conviction that in our waking, normal, and healthful state the external world is real, and truly represented by the senses. To say that this is simply a figment effected by the self-projective power of the mind, is to stultify all human experience; and to attribute it to a fiction deliberately and systematically practiced by the Creator, is little short of blasphemy.

with the course of natural events or human conduct? The inquiry is evidently pertinent under this head only to the initial act of creation, for we do not know that he has ever since, in any proper sense, brought any thing afresh into existence. All subsequent interposition falls under heads to be noticed hereafter. But in the nature of the case that first act was singular and *sui generis*, and therefore it is, of course, incapable of explanation by the method of comparison adopted in this discussion. If it be claimed to be properly miraculous, (and we see not how it can be otherwise considered if a *bona fide* fact at all,) then it comes under our final category, and must be disposed of substantially as any other miracle. One thing is certain, that all the attempts to evade it as an ultimate point in philosophy, such as have been made by evolutionism, for instance, are as unscientific as they are undevout. Even the crude heathen cosmogonies rebuke their inconclusiveness.

The divine superintendence of the world after its creation presents no considerable difficulty in a general way, but the doctrine of a special *providence* presiding over its affairs, and in particular over the concerns and movements and destiny of individual free agents, is often supposed to be fraught with great inconsistency, and even with positive contradiction. How, it is asked, can God interfere with the natural course of events without violating or abrogating his own fixed laws? We reply that a supernatural guidance and control of mundane and human incidents, such as the providential interposition in question, does not

necessarily involve or imply any direct, nor possibly any indirect, abatement, suspension, or contravention of either physical or psychological law. Divine providence, whether general or special, does not signify miraculous interposition, nor a resort to unusual or extraordinary modes of procedure. On the contrary, the most remarkable instances are often found to have been brought about by apparently the most trivial circumstances, and always by a combination of influences entirely normal in their character. It is the peculiar conjuncture of these causes, each slight and insignificant perhaps in itself, and their operation in a certain way and at a particular time, that changes the whole aspect of fortune, and results in the signal deliverance or overthrow of a single person or of an entire nation. Sometimes these causes are material, but oftener they are traceable to human determinations. The profane call them *luck*, but the philosopher knows that they are not fortuitous. Most of the so-called pieces of good or ill fortune are simply the outcome of prudence or negligence, of sagacity or ignorance, of economy or prodigality; or they are properly the sure rewards of virtue or of vice. All such instances we must throw out of the category of special providences, and remand them to the department of general providence. "God helps those who help themselves." In seeking, however, to expound the genuine examples of special providence, we must bear in mind certain facts and principles and limitations which, when duly taken into the account, will

relieve the case of its incredible, and perhaps also of its marvelous, character.

It is now generally conceded that the natural and the moral provinces of the divine government are, as a rule, administered separately, in this world at least; that is to say, a good man cannot expect exemption from trouble here, nor do the bad receive their full desert on earth in the form of temporal evil. The sun shines and the rain falls upon the field of saint and sinner alike,<sup>1</sup> and to the righteous tribulations are promised,<sup>2</sup> while the ungodly prosper in their earthly schemes.<sup>3</sup> This is true under the Christian dispensation, whatever may have been the case under the Jewish. It is doubted by many whether there are any exceptions to this isolation of the two departments of God's administration, and perhaps there really are none in which the line of division is wholly ignored; and thus the remark just made respecting a general providence remains good. But there certainly are peculiar cases of almost daily occurrence, in which temporal blessings and earthly escapes come to the pious, or business adverses and stunning catastrophes befall the irreligious, which lie beyond the range of human foresight and disappoint all probability, and which argue a moral purpose in the superintending Power. Answers to prayer are largely possible only on this principle. The experience of Job admirably illustrates the point under consideration. His three friends made the great mistake of supposing that suffering is always judicial, that is, that

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 45.

<sup>2</sup> John xvi, 33.

<sup>3</sup> Psalm xvii, 14.

natural misfortune is purely a penalty for moral obliquity; thus confounding the two spheres of the divine government. Yet his own calamities are clearly shown, both by their angelological introduction and their humanistic issue, to have had an ethical lesson for himself and his associates; and the book has been in all ages the most striking argument for a special providence. In elucidating philosophically what are presumably real examples of particular divine interposition, we must not forget that it is evidently part of God's plan to conceal his hand, at least for the present, in his dealings with mankind.<sup>1</sup> This hold true no less of his natural than of his spiritual operations.<sup>2</sup> We have seen how inscrutable is the link between his power and physics, and we ought to expect that in the providential realm his ways would be still more unsearchable. Were he too plainly to reveal his part in the great drama of life, its probationary ends would be largely defeated. We see this most clearly in the case of Job, who was not permitted to look behind the scenes, but whose trial of faith was enhanced by his inability to discover the divine hand which he felt assured was smiting him.<sup>3</sup> The Bible is full of intimations to this effect. All that we can expect, therefore, is to discover indications, more or less clear, of such agency, which, taken together and fixed by their moral bearings, point to God's finger. Perhaps in the other world these may be more fully translated, as they often are by

<sup>1</sup> Eccles. iii, 11; vii, 14; viii, 17.

<sup>2</sup> John iii, 8.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Job xxiii, 8, 9.

subsequent developments in this life. The main design being that of probationary discipline, special providence must always be a profound study, requiring docility and confidence on the part of the pupil.

It is a great help to a childlike faith, therefore, to be enabled to see through the dimming haze of a distant perception what we may not now be permitted to behold clearly and nearly; and in this effort to descry the divine interposition in our behalf, we not only derive comfort and assurance from the foregoing statements respecting the viewless impact of God's hand upon the secret sources of material influences, but still more from the reasonable belief that the springs of human thought and resolve, upon which destiny even more intimately depends, are fully and freely accessible to his ubiquitous and searching Spirit. How often a slight change of sentiment in one man's mind, whether our own or another's, for which no subjective cause can be assigned, alters the entire course of events! The association of ideas is not so fixed a chain but that supernatural influences may break or start the connection at any link. We are able so to affect our fellows, and it has been the universal belief of mankind that angelic spirits, both good and bad, have a still more subtle power over the mind. Shall God himself be excluded from the private chambers of the soul which he has made? Then farewell to all the delicious intercourse of those sacred communings which make the heart a shrine for the disclosed Shekinah, and are a foretaste of heaven itself. It is not a mere figure of speech when

we talk of intercourse with God, nor a delusion when we experience his inward communications. The effects of this intercommunion upon character, conduct, and contingency, eternity alone can reveal.

We now address ourselves to the last and most difficult form of divine interposition which we propose to consider in this paper, namely, *miracles*. These may be defined as preternatural acts wrought openly by men in attestation of divine authority. Their name and its use require the coincidence of all these particulars. They must be above all suspicion as to legerdemain or magic. Hence we are not at liberty to resolve them as the calling into play of some profound but otherwise unknown law overriding the ordinary laws of physics.<sup>1</sup> This is to reduce them to strange but not strictly extranatural events, and robs them of their distinctive character as palpable evidences of divine power. It is not enough that they be superhuman merely, they must be obviously and unmistakably of God. Instrumentalities are usually employed, but they are clearly and confessedly incompetent of themselves to effect the result. Miracles must not only be such occurrences as cannot be explained by the ordinary or known laws of nature—which is true of many unaccountable things and of prodigies in general, but they must be such as transcend, or rather, perhaps, we should say, diametrically transgress, certain well-known and clearly defined natural principles that universally prevail in other cases. They are a total suspension, for the time being,

<sup>1</sup> So Bushnell, "Nature and the Supernatural."



if not a direct violation and absolute reversal, of some of nature's laws, usually material, but in a few cases (as of "unknown tongues" and prophecy) extending, also, into the psychological sphere. Hence we see the shallowness of Hume's objection that "they are opposed to universal experience;" for if they were not contrary to what we elsewhere find, they would be no miracles at all. A merely peculiar or unusual experience proves no special divine agency. In order to be incontestable they must be utterly out of the line of human practicability. They must, in one word, be abnormal in the highest and truest sense. How, then, can they be reconciled with the uniformity of natural law? We answer, not by letting down the standard of miracle, nor by any compromise, but by frankly admitting that the two are in the given case incompatible. Natural law gives way before an overruling exercise of direct divine power. There is not only intervention, but contravention. We wish to meet this issue fairly and fully. Its philosophical solution, to us entirely satisfactory, lies in the adequacy of omnipotence, to which, by the very hypothesis, the event is referred. Its whole virtue as proof resides in this fact. Rationalists, who deny the possibility of miracles, simply beg the question. "Why should it be thought impossible with you that God should raise the dead?" Only because they are determined not to believe it. They prejudice the subject, and their opinion is of no more value than any other prejudice. The Being who brought nature into existence, and who, as we have seen, presides over

and maintains its laws, surely may reasonably be presumed to have power to alter, set aside, or reverse any of its processes; and for special cause he may well be supposed to do so at times. We, therefore, take no middle ground here, but boldly maintain the absolute and entire supremacy of God over the works of his own hand, and we insist that miracles are intended to evince that control in the most masterful way.

Nevertheless we propose to adduce some considerations which tend to soften the asperity of this doctrine, and divest it of seeming arbitrariness. This we do, however, not from any secret misgiving or sense of contradiction, but out of concession to the infirmity of an unbelieving age which has so long been drilled in the rationalistic tendencies of purely physical science that it finds it hard to realize an invisible God. This is not the first time in the world's history that a similar skepticism has prevailed. In the early days of Christianity, heathen philosophy had sunk into universal doubt, and among the Jews themselves there were many who said: "Since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were." True, both were ready to accredit miracles to demigods and devils, yet they combined to crucify the one greatest miracle of all. Pilate and Herod were that day at one, and spiritualism to-day compounds the sheerest unbelief with the rankest superstition. But so many centuries have now elapsed since a veritable miracle has been publicly wrought, that men have come to scan the true miracles of our Lord with

something of the same suspicion with which they have learned to look upon the spurious ones of ecclesiastical tradition. Whether any genuine miracles have been wrought since the apostles' days is simply a question of fact, to be ascertained—like any other fact—by the careful sifting of the evidence offered; and the miracles of the Bible likewise are simple facts, the verity of which rests upon its appropriate and abundant historical proof. Presumption, of course, always lies against miracles, both as a whole and in detail, as it does against any other unusual occurrence; but the improbability is no positive argument, and should yield to certainty on the presentation of competent testimony. Facts are stubborn things, and can neither be argued nor theorized out of existence. Not even law can stand against them. The true philosopher and scientist always humbly bows to them.

The many mysteries of life and death around and within us should serve as stepping-stones to our faith across the gulf of miracle. Creation, as we have already seen, is a ladder by which we descend to the brink of the stream of sacred marvels, and the resurrection is a staircase out of the gorge of revelation. But the passage of existence is filled midway with wonders equally inexplicable by natural science. Every day, from the moment of birth to the instant of decease, we spend nearly half our time in the fairy-land of dreams, where sleep, the twin-brother of death and the foster-father of life, holds us under his wizard spell: yet no scientist or naturalist or

specialist has succeeded in the least degree, with all the modern enginery of biological investigation and medico-therapeutical experiment, in prying open the door of this mystery or exploring its physical and psychological recesses. Less frequent instances of trance and second sight give us glimpses, more prolonged or less easily interrupted, into the spirit-world; but no excursion thither has ever brought back a syllable of intelligence concerning its curious scenes. Telescope and microscope alike fail to develop the arcana of nature, even where its field lies open to their ken. How much less can we expect to decry the footsteps of Deity along those miraculous paths which hide as well as reveal his power!

As we have all along intimated, it is the peculiarity of the divine method of teaching, in this preparatory school at least, where trust is a main element of successful pupilage that the truth shall be imparted by hints and signs rather than in direct and explicit statement. We are led as through a picture-gallery, where not the living faces nor the actual landscapes, but only their images, are presented, and a trained and loving æstheticism is called into exercise in order to appreciate their verisimilitude and beauty. Were the lesson so glaring that every careless wayfarer would be constrained to notice and understand and obey it, we should no longer be able to walk by faith—a guide who will accompany us where sight must necessarily leave us. The willing and the heedful need not err in deciphering the waymarks and in reading the guide-boards along the road of natural and revealed

religion ; but many things, both inside and outside of the Bible, are purposely left enigmatical, so as to test the carefulness and fidelity of the pilgrim to the shrine of truth. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Though now they see not, yet believing, they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. "Now we see as through a glass darkly, but then face to face ; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known." "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." "I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness."

Nevertheless we are permitted in some degree to refresh our faith by a few glimpses into the world of wonders around and above and before us ; and on a practical topic of fact, like that of miracle, we need not disdain any re-enforcement which vision or even speculation may afford us. A closer inspection of the supernatural element which we have pointed out in nature will afford us some aid in conceiving how Deity may consistently interfere at times with the usual consecution of physical cause and effect. Let us cite an example for this purpose ; we will take one of the strongest on record, the restoration of Lazarus to life. The body had been dead three or four days, and in that hot climate decomposition seems already to have begun. There is no room nor occasion for the rationalistic hypothesis of a swoon or catalepsy. A single word from the lips of the Lord brings back the vital current and puts the whole living organism

in perfect order. What was the therapeutic process? We answer, There was no process. The change was instantaneous and absolute. Had we or the most expert physician been present, nothing more would have been perceived or ascertained beyond the simple fact. Lazarus himself knew no more about it. Now compare an ordinary cure of a patient by medical means, and let us see exactly wherein they essentially differ. It is not in the extent of the ravages of disease, or the putridity of the corpse, or the mere consummation of death; for other miracles lacked these particulars, and yet—although less striking—they were as genuine instances of direct divine interference. Does not the real distinction lie mainly or altogether in this very fact of the apparent absence of a therapeutic link such as we are accustomed to find between the morbid and the healthful condition? Had our Lord administered a remedy to the man when sick, or employed some galvanic or antiseptic appliance, albeit unknown before or since and a profound secret with himself at the time, every body would say it was a wonderful exhibition of medical or scientific skill, but no one would think of calling it a miracle. But suppose a similar result had been brought about by some such so-called natural means, would it, in the light of the above views respecting the spiritual source of the invisible properties of matter, have been any less in essential truth an exercise of divine power? Certainly not, but it would in that case have been God's act indirect and mediate, instead of direct and immediate. That is the only real

difference between any common event and a miracle of the purest kind. Just so if a man should move a body outside of himself without touching it either with his members or any intermediate apparatus, it would be a genuine exhibition of supernatural power. (We have no confidence in the alleged table-tippings, etc., by disembodied spirits.) But he can move his own limbs without any exterior machinery, and we call this a natural act. His finite and corporeal nature renders him competent to the latter class of efforts, but disqualifies him from the former. On the other hand, no such distinction of mechanism is applicable to God, who is infinite and incorporeal. Matter is not properly his body, nor is it either exterior or interior to him. He pervades, permeates, energizes, vitalizes it in all cases and every-where; his contact and influence are in reality universally ultimate and causal. In a manner analogous to man he employs the so-called physical powers or laws as his organs or instruments of action, but he is not, like man, limited by them: on the contrary, they are constituted and controlled by him; and he must be supposed to be capable of acting independently of them, if he has any absolute existence and power whatever. His really direct energy upon matter itself, bestowing and sustaining its ordinary properties and qualities, enables us to see how he may, for the time being, change, suspend, or reverse those attributes, or confer entirely different ones; and this we call a miracle. But as we are only able to formulate in numerical ratio the internal bond between cause and effect in any of the mechanical, chemical,

or vital functions of substance, however common, if direct; so are we, of course, unable to express otherwise than in relative magnitude the secret co-ordination between the divine behest and the immediate outflow of miraculous result. In short, if we cannot understand how God operates in nature except through the supernatural, how can we be expected to conceive of him as acting in the purely supernatural except directly of himself? Miracles therefore, albeit the strangest thing in nature, are not so much unnatural as at once infra-natural and supra-natural. They go below the surface of ordinary nature, and reveal its real capacity in the Hand that comprehends it all. In ordinary events God operates, so to speak, at arm's length; in the miraculous he seizes right hold of matter in its substance, and molds it arbitrarily to his will. He is himself equally inscrutable in both, but in the former he veils his presence, while in the latter he commands our awe. The one may be called the covert, the other the overt, act of Deity.

Finally, we must ever bear in mind that the Bible is pre-eminently the book of *revealed* religion. It includes and presupposes, indeed, the great truths of natural theology, but it goes immeasurably beyond them. Whether these latter are in a strict sense discoverable by an original exercise of the unaided human faculties, is yet a question among thinkers; certain it is that most of them, and, according to many, the very idea of a personal God, have descended by tradition from primeval revelation. But a revealed



theology must in the nature of the case largely involve the preternatural element, while yet it must be in harmony with the natural, that "elder Scripture writ by God's own hand" upon the outward creation, as the other is "in fleshly tables of the heart." In point of fact we find from universal history and observation that mankind at large have had no difficulty in accepting the supernatural; indeed, they have rather run into the opposite error of superstition. Barbaric heathendom has peopled the earth, the air, and the waters with sprites, and cultured paganism has hypostatized almost every visible thing into unseen spiritual powers. Christianity has dismantled the Pantheon of its numerous gods and goddesses, but it has enshrined the saintly more sacredly than ever. The evangel of the New Testament scarcely undertook to exorcise the world of demonology, and the gospel of modern science has altogether failed to eliminate the supernatural from its own realm. The heart of humanity still beats true to its spiritual instincts, and the most learned, profound, acute, and godly are as fully alive as ever to the supernatural sphere which closely invests and pervades the natural. We feel every instant the vibrations that pass through the thin veil between the seen and the unseen universe, and cannot for a moment forget the alliance of the finite with the infinite, nor divorce the sensible from the supersensuous. The mass of Christian believers are thoroughly sound on the great questions of the day, counted such by a class of speculativists, which grow out of the funda-

mental point under discussion, namely, inspiration, the atonement, and eternal retribution, all of them phases of supernaturalism in close contact with naturalism; and we may trust their good sense and earnest spiritualism to conserve these vital tenets for all time to come.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For confirmation of the main position of this essay, see an able paper on "The Modern Theory of Force," by Rev. J. S. Van Dyke, in the "Journal of Christian Philosophy," for October, 1883, which proves that "*in its nature force is immaterial*;" it is the result and proof of mind.

THIRD ESSAY.

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INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY  
SCRIPTURES.

# ANALYSIS.

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## I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Fact of inspiration admitted.
2. Its importance.
3. The difficulty stated.

## II. VERBAL INSPIRATION OBJECTED TO.

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  - a. Advocates of it.
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  - a. *Persons* only are capable of inspiration.
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5. No translation verbally inspired.
  - a. Equivocation on this point.
  - b. Textual criticism unavailing.
6. Thought not confined to language.
7. Scripture words inspired only in a modified sense.
8. "Plenary inspiration" a still more unfortunate phrase.
  - a. For all the reasons above given.
  - b. None on earth commissioned thus.
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## III. LATITUDINARIAN VIEWS.

1. Their variant positions.
2. Their unspiritual basis.
3. Special arguments against them.
  - a. No discrimination possible.
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## IV. CONSERVATIVE THEORY.

1. Its intermediate position.
2. Accordance with God's method.
3. Faith still required.
4. Meets the demands.

## THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

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THAT the Bible is divinely inspired in some sense and to some extent is, of course, the belief of all Christendom. Even if the statement of the apostle, that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God," be interpreted to signify only certain portions of Holy Writ and varying degrees of supernatural influence, still the fact of inspiration, be it more or less, is conceded, and, therefore, need not here be proved. The limitations, however, remain for us to consider. The importance of such a discussion is obvious, for upon this point depend the credit and authority due to the Bible in whatever line it professes to teach and command. The question indeed is fundamental, not only to theology in general, but also to many departments of historical and scientific research upon which the Book directly or indirectly touches at various points. If we hold a vague or dubious position as to the inspiration of the Scriptures, we will assuredly take doubtful and untenable ground, not only respecting the central doctrines of Christianity, such as the Atonement and future retribution, but we will be equally weak in defending the outlying stations, such as prophecy and

miracle, and will especially endanger the allied relations of philosophic and literary truth. The modern contest on this subject rallies, like all the phases of present skepticism, around this problem at the core, namely, how far and in what way we may reconcile as well as distinguish the divine and the human in the Bible. That these two elements co-exist there is evident, not only from the current title of the book, "the *Holy Bible*," and its traditionary place in the Church and the world, but from the manifest peculiarities of its contents, such as their unexampled reach into the otherwise unknown, yet their singular reticence on curious, romantic, and egotistic details, and especially their marvelous and ever-growing hold upon humanity at large; but the compatibility of these elements still continues a puzzle to the profound not less than to the shallow mind, to the believer as well as to the infidel. The difficulty of reconciliation has unfortunately been enhanced by the extreme views too often entertained, whether by friend or foe, of superstitious verbalism on the one hand and of free-thinking sentimentalism on the other. A calm but searching re-examination of the facts in the case, and of their necessary conditions, both linguistic and psychical, is eminently called for by the modern crisis of theological and literary controversy; and we may hope, even in the brief compass of the present paper, to contribute something toward the settlement of this deep-rooted and ever-recurring question. The Bible was written by men; how, then, can it be the word of God? Three theories or positions have, in

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substance, been advanced and maintained on the subject, which it will be our aim fairly to state and freely to criticise.

The oldest and perhaps still the most widely prevalent opinion is what is most fittingly designated as the *mechanical* view of inspiration, namely, that the Holy Spirit dictated to the sacred writers the identical words which they have penned. Thus, some of the early Christian fathers, especially Justin Martyr, following the Jewish lead of Josephus, Philo, and others, represent the prophets, apostles, and evangelists as the "organs" of the divine power, and they use various figures to this effect, such as a musical instrument, the harp, etc. Certain modern authors, particularly Gaussen,<sup>1</sup> are fond of calling the biblical writers the *amanuenses* of God. It is claimed that the Scriptures themselves favor this view in their phraseology on the subject, for example, that "men spake as they were *moved* by the Holy Ghost," that the "word of the Lord *came* unto" them, etc. But a more careful inspection of the language of these sacred and ecclesiastical authorities renders it more than doubtful if they really intended to set forth the view in question; for they elsewhere so qualify their terms and employ such dissimilar phrases and statements as to disprove any idea of mere passivity, much less unconscious possession of the human faculties by divine influence. The first Christian Council<sup>2</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> "Theopneusty," etc.

<sup>2</sup> That of Trent, following in the lead of the "Clementines," which express the early view of the Catholic Church.

ever pronounced on this topic expressly condemned the idea of any frenzy on the part of the sacred writers as a heathenish tenet, and the most violent advocates of the mechanical theory continually declaim upon the entire self-possession of the subjects of inspiration and the normal exercise of all their idiosyncracies. The inconsistency of these two latter positions is indeed apparent at a glance, for if the exact language and the precise form of the Scriptures were directly and imperatively prescribed by the Spirit of God, it is difficult, or rather impossible, to see what room is left for the personal style of the individual men. They have no more choice than the copyist in transcribing, or the short-hand note-taker in reporting. Hence the viciousness of the comparison so frequently made of the sacred writers to scribes inditing a communication made through them; for these have no freedom or discretion allowed them, nor play of thought, or fancy, or habit; and the introduction of their own peculiarities would be an unheard-of impertinence. The Bible does not so represent inspiration, for in their loftiest flights "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," and even in the extraordinary cases at Corinth Paul insists upon full self-control and entire naturalness in the utterance of the divine communications, especially as to phraseology.<sup>1</sup>

A common name for the mechanical theory is *verbal* inspiration, a phrase which, while perhaps it accurately characterizes the view in question, at the same time

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiv, 27-30.



exposes its untenableness. In the strict sense words are incapable of inspiration; it is only the *person* who utters them that can properly be said to be inspired. Words are merely signs of ideas, conventionally employed for inter-communication, and consist of visible or audible symbols, such as vibrations of the air, inflections of voice, marks written or printed on paper, etc. In any of these, therefore, inspiration is out of the question. All that can be meant by "verbal inspiration" is that the writers or speakers were inspired to use the exact words which they have employed. In a qualified sense every one will admit such an expression, namely, that there was a divine or providential superintendence over the sacred writers, preserving them from all serious inaccuracy; but this is a very different thing from an absolute and explicit prescription of the identical phraseology, so that no variation or spontaneity should be possible. That this latter was not true in point of fact is evident, not only from the native peculiarities of style exhibited by each individual, as above noticed, but still more conclusively from the imperfections which lie upon the surface of many expressions employed, and which become still more striking when the language is critically examined. There are solecisms in grammar, blemishes in rhetoric, and faults in logic, which we cannot attribute to the Holy Spirit; they are obviously defects arising from the imperfect channel of communication. In short, they are plainly features of human composition, and disclose the origin of the phraseology in which they are imbedded.

The same conclusion results from a comparison of the doctrines, and even of the historical statements, of the various sacred writers; for instance, of Paul and James on the subject of justification, whether it be by faith or by works, in which they only seem to disagree; or the several Gospel narratives, wherein apparent discrepancies occur; or even of the two versions of the decalogue itself,<sup>1</sup> which do not exactly tally in their verbiage—all such variations must be ascribed to the free play of the human faculties acting under their natural and circumstantial impulses and associations, and they are utterly inconsistent with the theory of direct and minute verbal inspiration. The sacred writers themselves claim no such immediate and explicit dictation of their words. Whatever may have been the case in a few special communications which the prophets and the apostles orally made, the books, as we now have them, were certainly composed in private by their authors in the ordinary way of human literature, saving, of course, the general divine guidance which they every-where assume. Neither Moses in his autograph of the law, nor David in his titles to the Psalms; neither Isaiah in his poetical flights, nor Ezra in his editorial labors; neither Luke in his prefaces, nor John in his Apocalypse; neither evangelist in his record, nor apostle in his letter, gives the slightest countenance to the idea that the particular words which they wrote were prescribed to them by special divine suggestion.

At this point it is essential that we draw two dis-

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xx, 1-17; Deut. v, 6-21.

tinctions, which, important and obvious as they are, have often been strangely overlooked in this discussion. The first is the difference between *revelation* and *inspiration*, that is, between the communication of unknown and otherwise undiscoverable truth to the sacred writers, and the disclosure of that truth to others. Not all which the Bible contains is revealed: much of its information was known to the writers by the ordinary means of experience, observation, and reflection; and the natural faculties of memory, judgment, and imagination were sufficient to bring it to mind when needed. But the Bible is all inspired, even those passages which relate to the most common affairs. What Moses rehearses concerning his own life and labors is as truly inspired as what he discloses concerning the creation of the world, although the knowledge was derived by him from very different sources; and the apostles' record of their Master's life and sayings is just as much inspired as their epistles for the guidance of the Church. The Revelator saw all the visions equally, but some of them he was forbidden to divulge; and Pharaoh had revelations in dreams which only Joseph could interpret, and which neither of them was inspired to write. The second distinction, therefore, which we must bear in mind, is the difference between the original afflatus which enabled the prophets and the apostles to utter their teachings orally, and the later influence which qualified them to write down what they have left on record. We are treating of the inspiration of the Bible as a book, and not of the men,

whether the same or others, who spoke or did what is therein recited. Some of the latter possessed the gift of prophecy and supernatural insight, and others did not; some of the things related required preternatural information, and others did not; but all equally needed divine guidance as to what and where and how the *writing* should be. For example, Paul was just as much inspired to tell Timothy to send on his cloak from Troas, as in any of his directions for the government of the Church under his care; but the previous spiritual authority requisite for the latter was not needed for the former. Paul himself explicitly refers to this difference between what he enjoins as of divine appointment, and what he advises as of his own judgment;<sup>1</sup> yet in both he was equally directed by a divine impulse as to whether he should or should not say it, and as to the manner of his saying it. There are a great variety of commonplace matters in the Bible; but these are not on that account any the less there by divine appointment. Among all the mass of things present to the sacred writers' minds at the moment of writing, whether stored up by their own powers or gathered from any external source, be it human or divine, be it in the past or just then occurrent, they needed and they experienced minute supernatural guidance as to what to include and what to exclude, and also in what spirit and aspect to state it. This we understand by the inspiration of the Scriptures, and it applies equally and truly to every portion of them. This

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii, 6, 12, 25, 40.

cuts up, root and branch, all the fanciful distinctions made by the Jews and some of their Christian imitators between the inspiration of the law and that of the prophets, between the words of Jesus and those of Paul, between the record of Matthew or John and that of Mark or Luke, between the books of a noted prophet and those of an obscure or unknown writer in the canon, between the essential and the incidental declarations of Scripture. Whatever may have been their original source or their degree of revelation, they all now stand precisely on a level of authority as parts of Holy Writ, since they were finally penned as we have them, under exactly the same influence of the Holy Spirit. This view of the case also eliminates many elements of difficulty from the whole discussion, and prepares us to examine more distinctly the real question at issue.

We return, therefore, to the main point by asking, Did the inspiration of the biblical writers extend so far as to prescribe the particular words employed by them? We answer in the negative, for the following reasons besides the above. In the first place, we gain nothing of any value for the Holy Scriptures by making such a demand upon the faith of their recipients. All that we need in this regard for their successful circulation and evangelical or scientific use, is the maintenance of the entire truthfulness and paramount authority of their *contents*; their verbal *minutiæ* may safely be left to critical, lexical, and grammatical investigation, as being of human origin and, therefore, of secondary importance and relative

accuracy. Nay, we greatly hamper the latter modes of inquiry, if we do not altogether supersede them, by claiming the direct and explicit dictation by the Holy Spirit of the very words under inspection. It is sufficient if the facts, principles, and doctrines set forth in the Bible are true and of divine sanction, without undertaking to show that the precise language is also of celestial origin and supernatural perfection. The infidel will certainly worst us in any encounter on the latter ground ; but the former is impregnable. The day is past for repeating the folly of teaching that even the Hebrew vowel-points are inspired, or that the New Testament Greek is of classical purity. Protestants may be content with averring that the Bible is the only and sufficient rule for faith and practice, without holding it up as a paragon of rhetorical or linguistic faultlessness. Beautiful and forceful as it usually is, often exquisitely so, yet it was not designed as a text-book or model of style or language. It has a far higher aim and a wider plan as a guide of human belief and conduct. We can therefore afford to overlook these microscopic blemishes, which, after all, serve to bring it closer to our human sympathies, and to develop our faith and diligence. There is still enough left of the divine in its guise and fashioning to distinguish it from every other book on earth, and to excite our warmest admiration even as a literary production.

In the second place, if the inspiration of the Bible consists in the prescription of the precise words in

which they are couched, no translation can with any propriety be said to be inspired; and as comparatively few can read the original languages, it necessarily ceases to be the word of God to the mass of mankind. This would be a very grievous misfortune. It is idle to say that the *meaning* is retained and transferred; not a single *word* is the same. At this point the advocates of verbal inspiration are guilty of a tergiversation and equivocation unworthy of the holy book. They silently shift their position to an asseveration of the identity of thought and idea; but the language is certainly and wholly changed so as to be utterly undistinguishable to the vast majority of readers. The Mohammedans may consistently refuse to have the Koran in any but the Arabic original, for they maintain its verbal inspiration, and point to its phraseology as the one miracle of its author; but it is frivolous and suicidal, in these days of Bible Societies, of missionary activity, and of revision labors, to set up any such preposterous plea for the text of Scripture. Nay more, we cannot be sure that we have the *ipsissima verba* of the Hebrew, Chaldee, or Greek original in any extant manuscript or edition: the myriads of various readings, while indeed they do not—all put together—affect in the slightest degree the truth of any doctrine, nor essentially vary the purport of any important passage, do nevertheless wholly invalidate, in thousands of cases, the certainty of the identical words. If the autographs had been written, and not merely dictated, by God himself, it would have been a useless task, with-

out a miraculous transcription of all the copies, and an inspired translation into every human tongue. Nobody nowadays pretends these last, and it is equally vain to claim the former.

Much confusion and misconception on this subject has been occasioned by the assertion that we are incapable of thought without language, and that therefore the words of Scripture are an essential part of their inspiration. This is simply an error. We often have ideas which we cannot put into words, nor adequately express in any way. It is the commonest thing in the world to say, and to say truly, "I am at a loss for words to convey my meaning." It is equally a mistake to suppose that the Holy Spirit cannot communicate thought without at the same time dictating language. We often express ideas by signs merely. The very brutes tell each other, and even us, what is passing in their mind (so to speak) without articulate speech. The Bible itself repeatedly speaks of the Holy Spirit as inspiring the believer with emotions and sentiments that cannot be uttered.<sup>1</sup> It is a precious privilege for human beings to exchange mute signals, and sometimes even unconsciously to affect one another with new impressions. All nature speaks to us without a tongue, and God talks with the devout soul chiefly in silent communings. It is absurd and almost impious to limit the Holy One to language in the communication of his will. It is true that the reduction of thought to language compels us to greater exactness in its expression, but we

<sup>1</sup>Rom. viii, 26; 2 Cor. xii, 4.



may easily give another a conception to be communicated to a third party in his own terms. In such a case its essence is still to be credited to its original source, while the final *form* is the product of the channel through which it has passed. The invention may be patented, but the trade-mark is separately copyrighted.

There is, nevertheless, a sense in which the words of Holy Scripture may be said to be inspired, and thus the Bible becomes truly the word of God; but it is only so because its language conveys the mind of the Spirit, and has been guarded in its utterance by a special inward providence. This is quite different from affirming a direct and exact dictation or suggestion of the very words employed. In short we use a rhetorical figure—called *metonymy*, by which something is predicated of a subject, which is strictly attributable only to something else closely related to it or associated with it. It is the thought that is properly inspired, and the words naturally follow.

Another objectionable expression frequently employed in lieu of *verbal* is "*plenary* inspiration" as applied to the Bible. This is not a scriptural phrase, nor is it a correct one. It is not only weighted with all the difficulties named against "verbal inspiration," but it has other serious ones of itself. The principal objection is that it implies far more than is true or than can be substantiated. No man was ever plenary inspired except the Lord Jesus, and he wrote nothing now extant, nor are we sure that we have his identical words even in the gospels. Yet he declined to reveal much that he knew, and on some subjects

he actually pleaded ignorance in his subordinate capacity as the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> The prophets and apostles certainly advanced no claim that they knew every thing, not even on the topics of which they wrote; on the contrary, they often speak quite diffidently in some respects, and they omit—whether from ignorance or design—very much that we would like to know. Their information was necessarily limited, and their range of thought and apprehension was, in a multitude of cases, evidently very narrow. It is quite enough for us to maintain their substantial accuracy on the matters which they have actually declared, without undertaking to prove that they were plenarily inspired in any thing. They wrote what they were directed to write, and nothing more. They needed and they took no further liberty than to exercise their godly discretion as to the manner and language of their communications in the divine name.<sup>2</sup> Inspiration, beyond the subject-matter selected and the general form of its presentation, would have been as superfluous as incongruent. God never does for a man what he can do for himself; he certainly works no gratuitous miracles, nor bestows any plenipotentiary gifts upon mortals. Christians greatly weaken their cause by such superorthodoxy; the soundest theologians have never thus exposed themselves, and the best divines have wisely abstained from the use of superlative or extravagant language on this subject.

Diametrically opposed to the mechanical theory of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xx, 23; Mark xiii, 32; Acts i, 7.   <sup>2</sup> Luke i, 3; Acts xv, 28.

inspiration is what may appropriately be called the *rationalistic* view, which not only denies that the words of Scripture are in any peculiar sense inspired, but makes such a low estimate of the divine influence present with the sacred writers as to admit that they may have fallen into actual error in what they have written. The advocates of this theory range all the way from the cautious and comparatively evangelical school, who restrict the possibility of error in Holy Writ to what they term unimportant or immaterial points, such as scientific or secular matters, but vigorously defend the accuracy of the Bible on moral and religious questions, down to the broad class of free-thinkers, who maintain that the scriptural writers were liable to mistake in every thing; that, in short, they were on a plane little if any higher than the mental or spiritual exaltation of any good and enlightened man nowadays, especially in his favored moments of sacred communings; in a word, they fluctuate between the thinly disguised latitudinarianism of such critics as Schleiermacher, Stanley, and Bushnell, and the semi-infidelity of such authors as Ewald, Colenso, and Robertson Smith. The Broad-Church party in Great Britain, and the New England wing in America, are thoroughly tainted with this laxity of opinion on the subject of inspiration, and it is the core of their canker which, as we have intimated, diffuses its *pyæmia* through their whole theological system. Its symptoms are as varying and insidious as those of malaria, but the infection everywhere shows itself in a loosening of the hold of the

Bible upon the convictions and reverence of its patients. The word of God becomes practically the mere word of man, and is treated in a like cavalier manner. Its so-called blunders, imperfections, and discrepancies are magnified and paraded in contrast with the precision of modern science and literature; and wherever the two seem to come into conflict the Bible, of course, is wrong, and must give way before the superior light and truth of archæological, philosophic, or æsthetic discovery. It only the old story in another phase—making void the divine word through human tradition; not now Rabbinic, or Cabalistic, or Romish superstition, but none the less a subtle trickery of man's self-conceit. This set of men speak indeed with external respect of the Bible, and often bestow great labor upon its philology, its history, and its other literary aspects; but they never develop its *hyponoia*, or inner meaning—that which addresses the soul, and they ignore its spiritual power. To them it is a mere volume, like those of Herodotus, or Homer, or Horace, to be discussed, explained, dissected, and corrected as any other purely human composition. Such a view of Scripture does not meet the wants of the heart of man, and can never satisfy the ends of a divinely sanctioned code for the pious individual or the Christian Church. The instincts of the regenerate soul will forever reject this theory as a “cunningly devised fable,” and will feel that in the Bible “we have a more sure word” of sacred instruction than this position leaves to us.

There is neither room nor occasion here to recite general arguments in favor of an infallible canon of Scripture, much less to detail the proofs of the claim of each book to a place in it; we can only point to a few considerations which go to show the essential defectiveness and inconclusiveness of the latitudinarian view of inspiration. The practical difficulty in applying it is shown in the general discrepancy above noted in the extent to which it has been carried by its votaries; they agree in scarcely any thing except their destructive tendency. Who shall decide what is essential or important in the Scriptures, so as to confine inspiration to that part? Who can say what fact, or statement, or principle belongs to the moral, the religious, or the ecclesiastical sphere, so that it shall come within the purview of the Divine Spirit? The most trivial circumstance or casual intimation often turns out to be of signal value and significance in settling some vitally interesting question in ethics and spiritual economy, no less than in history and science. Any discrimination of this kind must be arbitrary and fluctuating. Every man will thus accept what he pleases, and an objective rule of faith becomes wholly impossible. The purpose of revelation is defeated, and inspiration itself is a chimera. Moreover, if we are at liberty to discredit one passage or declaration of the Bible, we are equally free to doubt any and every one; nay, we cannot help doing so more or less, and we soon come to lose all confidence in the truth of the word of God. This is actually the effect of the position in question;

its whole bearing is pernicious, and only the sentiment engendered by early associations or by professional interests preserves its votaries from an outright rupture with all orthodoxy. Such views are antagonistic to a deep religious experience, and they are the ally of popular unbelief. They tend both logically and practically to exclude God from his own Book. This theory of inspiration, if such it can be called, denies rather than solves the problem of the union of the divine and human elements in the Bible; it cuts the knot which it cannot untie. It fails by adopting the other alternative from the verbal theory, which virtually eliminates the human agency, as this does the divine. It is hard to say which horn of the dilemma gores the worst. We seek a channel safe from either extreme.

A mediating line between these opposite dangers has already been indicated in this discussion, and it remains for us more distinctly to develop it. It is known as the *dynamic* theory of inspiration, and it consists in maintaining that while the substance of Scripture is of divine prescription, and therefore of paramount authority, its particular form and verbiage are of human origin, and consequently subject to the ordinary imperfections of earthly productions. In general terms, we may say that the meaning is inspired and the language spontaneous. This view alone meets the facts in the case, and harmonizes the otherwise incompatible elements. It is moreover in keeping with all the other spiritual experiences of the soul, which are uniformly in the line of normal

activity, however supernaturally induced ; the power is of God, but the functions or operations are those of man. In regeneration, for example, the emotions are consciously and characteristically human, yet they are the effect of a hidden divine influence;<sup>1</sup> and in sanctification likewise the habits are personal traits and exertions while they are at the same time the result throughout of heavenly grace.\* The whole Gospel scheme is a system of divine and human co-operation, and this synergism prevails no less in the external than in the internal sphere of salvation ; it eminently distinguishes the Bible from all other books, whether profane or professedly sacred. Its inspiration is neither the unconscious raving of the Delphic oracle, nor the spontaneous rapture of poetic genius, but a calm enthusiasm, which intelligently utters the mind of the Spirit. God supplies whatever is essential to making known his will in a way consistent with his deliberate purpose, but he does not override nor supersede the usual methods of each messenger's expression. Had he seen fit, he might have commissioned an angel to deliver his truth directly from the skies, as he did on Sinai ; or he might have written it, as he did the Decalogue, with his own finger on tablets of enduring material ; but he has preferred to intrust the treasure to earthen vessels, in order that in the end the excellency might be more evidently of God. Probably the sacred writers themselves could have given no more intelligible account of their own inspiration than this : that

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 8.

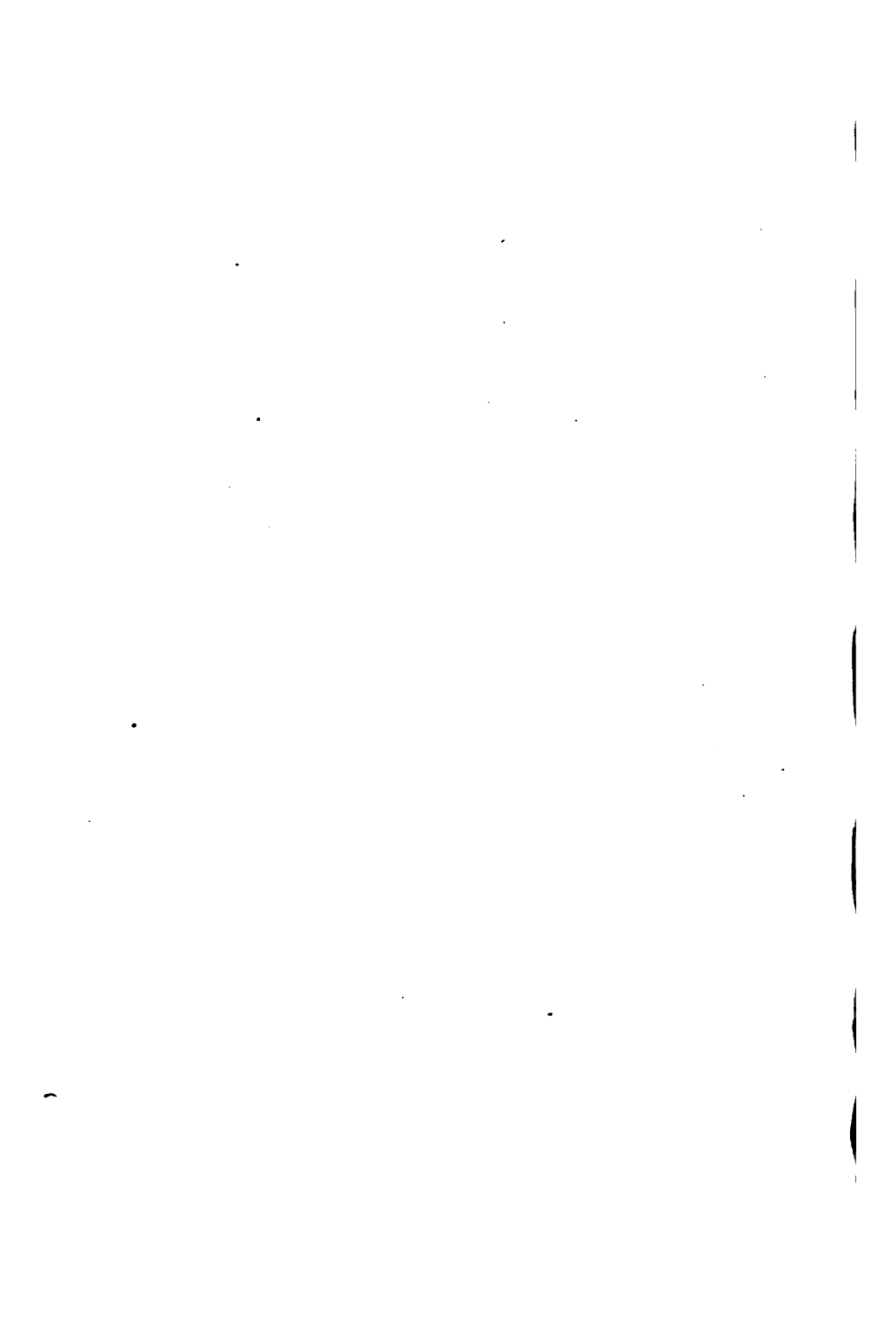
\* Phil. ii, 12, 13.

they were actuated and guided in general in their writing by a divine impulse, but expressed themselves freely in their usual style. More than this would have degraded them to automata, and would have robbed them of the sympathy of their fellow-men as readers. The beautiful play of divine light and human shade would have been wanting in the picture of truth, the variety and delicacy of natural taste and temperament would have been marred, and a constraint thrown over the Book, leaving it stiff and repulsive. Even its blemishes contribute to its usefulness by trying the patience, eliciting the diligence, and testing the candor of its readers. While the word is sufficiently plain that no one need err therein, it is not so clear that none can blunder. God's great design is to cultivate our faith, and he writes no lesson so as to render this superfluous. We must ever take heed how we read, as well as what we read. For this reason he has chosen human channels of communication, with all their peculiarities, defects, and liabilities; and he has only controlled, supplemented, and energized them so as to obviate fatal damage. What the men already knew, if sufficient for his purpose, he simply adopted and authorized; and what they did not know, if essential to the end in view, he preternaturally furnished. The writers themselves must be preserved from error in their conceptions of the truth to be communicated, but it was neither possible nor desirable to protect them from so expressing it that they could not be misunderstood. We must therefore exercise our best



judgment in expounding their meaning, assured that when we have really and undoubtedly ascertained it we have attained a correct and trustworthy knowledge in the case.

We have thus, we trust, reached an effectual and satisfactory solution of the problem with which we set out, namely, to discriminate between the divine and the human in sacred Scripture; and although neither here or anywhere can we trace the connection of these two elements to its ultimate *nexus*, yet we have arrived at a conclusion which, while it conserves all that is important in the authority of Holy Writ, at the same time dissipates the incongruity attaching to crude conceptions and unscientific positions on the subject.



FOURTH ESSAY.

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THE HARMONY OF DIVINE  
REVELATION.

# ANALYSIS.

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## I. FUNDAMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS.

1. Possibility of externality to God.
2. Creation is a revelation.
3. Love the key to creation and redemption.
4. Calvinism and Universalism excluded.
5. The Trinity involved in creation and revelation.
6. Common necessity of revelation.
7. Science not opposed to religion.

## II. GENERAL AGREEMENT OF THE SUCCESSIVE DISPENSATIONS.

1. Universality and homogeneity of law.
    - a. Among angels.
    - b. In Eden.
    - c. During the patriarchal age.
    - d. With Mosaism.
    - e. Under the Gospel.
    - f. In heaven.
  2. Sacrifice, as embodying prayer and evincing faith.
    - a. Immediate communion in Eden.
    - b. Mediation of the patriarchs.
    - c. Priestly intervention under the Levitical economy.
    - d. Personal access by the Gospel.
    - e. Restoration of direct intercourse in the heavenly world.
  3. Penitence a constant mark of moral convalescence.
    - a. No provision for the fallen angels.
    - b. Implied repentance of our first parents.
    - c. Rebuke of the peccadilloes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and spiritual discipline of Job.
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- d.* Contrition of David and other Jewish kings.
- e.* The blood of One alone cancels sin.
- f.* Penitence even of Nineveh and Nebuchadnezzar.
- g.* Repentance under John the Baptist's preaching.
- h.* True relation of contrition to conversion.
- i.* Value of penitence in the state of final blessedness.
- j.* Remorse an evidence of perdition.

### III. CONSISTENCY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS IN PARTICULAR.

- 1. In ethics.
  - a.* The Sabbath.
  - b.* Polygamy.
  - c.* Slavery.
  - d.* Intemperance.
  - e.* War, revenge, and imprecation.
  - f.* Duplicity.
- 2. In ecclesiastical institutions and usages.
  - a.* Select ministers.
  - b.* Sacraments—minutely compared—*versus* Quakerism.
- 3. In politics and economics.
  - a.* Universal brotherhood and treatment of foreigners.
  - b.* Civil order and loyalty.
  - c.* Public enterprise, industry, and frugality.
- 4. In domestic and social maxims.
  - a.* Conjugal fidelity.
  - b.* Parental obligation.
  - c.* Filial duty.
  - d.* Servant and master.
  - e.* Buyer and seller.
  - f.* Debtor and creditor.
  - g.* Courtesy, humanity, hospitality, and neighborly conduct.
- 5. In æsthetical culture.
  - a.* Schools and education.
  - b.* Encouragement of literature.

## IRENICS.

- c.* Patronage of the arts and sciences.
  - d.* Refinement of manners.
- 6. In philosophy.
  - a.* Ontology—God, angels, and man.
  - b.* Trichotomy.
  - c.* Cosmology.
  - d.* Realism.
- 7. In religious principles.
  - a.* Strict monotheism.
  - b.* Personal consecration.
  - c.* Moral heroism.
- 8. In spiritual experience.
  - a.* Regeneration.
  - b.* Adoption.
  - c.* Inspiration.
  - d.* Sanctification.
  - e.* Anticipation of the future state.
- 9. Conclusion.

# THE HARMONY OF DIVINE REVELATION.

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## INTRODUCTION.

GRANTING the postulate of the existence of a single perfect Deity, we should expect unity in all that proceeds from him. The only thing that really excites our wonder is that any thing should have proceeded from him at all. How or why should the Infinite project himself into the finite? This is the ultimate puzzle of all philosophy, and especially of its highest form, theosophy. The idea of creation, in a proper sense, is the doctrine of the Bible; the fact itself is hardly an intuition of consciousness or a deduction from perception. Aside from revelation, men have deified either themselves or nature. Pantheism, in the one form or the other, has been but the reciprocal of atheism. Usually this has taken on the grossest guise of idolatry, but its most refined phase, the Oriental emanation theory, has ventured no farther than to account for the production of immaterial essences. Brahm still sits aloof from sublunary things, while the *avatars*, no less than Buddha, are but transient variations or incarnations of subsidiary gods. Dualism, under some aspect or other, has been the

constant resort of religionists to explain the phenomena of the universe ; but the origin of evil has ever remained an insoluble problem, whether by means of Ormuzd and Ahriman, or of Jehovah and Satan, whether by Hyle and Psyche, or by the Asas and Loke.

Our first observation, therefore, is that creation itself is a species of revelation—in fact, is the basis of all revelation. It is, moreover, harder to conceive than any subsequent act of revelation. The distance between God and any finite intelligence, vast as it is, seems but a span compared with the immeasurable and unfathomable gulf between pure spirit and simple matter. But for the inscrutable link which we find in our own person, we might well doubt the possibility of their co-existence, or at least of their connection. Indeed, not even this fact, palpable as mortals find it, has deterred theorists from materialism on the one hand, or Berkeleyism on the other, in the effort to reconcile or reduce the incongruity. If, then, we can once get over this difficulty, we shall have comparatively little trouble in conceding the demands of revelation afterward.

The explication of this whole subject, of course, lies in the nature of God himself, who, by hypothesis and concession, is the source of all things. It becomes us to tread reverently as well as cautiously in the shade of these awful mysteries, but, emboldened by the light of the inspired Book, we have no hesitation in pronouncing creation the offspring of Divine love.

It is noteworthy that, many-sided as is the repre-



sentation of the Divine character, and various as are the terms, figures, and symbols employed in Scripture to set it forth, God is never there styled absolutely power, justice, holiness, or the like, although he is often concretely called almighty, just, holy, etc. ; but in the New Testament he is unqualifiedly termed *light* and *love*, as if these were his most abstract or essential qualities. Intelligent benignity, therefore, we may justly presume to have been the ground principle of creation. It would seem that the Divine Being was not content to dwell alone in his self-sufficiency, but yearned for other beings upon whom to lavish the superfluity, so to speak, of his own felicity. We see, even in the fallen image of the Godhead in man, that the truest, purest, and most abiding bliss springs from the consciousness of blessing others ; and we may, without presumption, say that the desire of rendering creatures likewise happy was the final cause or impulse of creation. In this modified aspect only can we accept the otherwise seemingly selfish dogma that God created man for his own superlative glory. At the same time Divine Omniscience, of course, foresaw the catastrophe of the Fall, and, therefore, we are compelled to believe that the Creator, in arranging (or, if any prefer so to say, permitting) the contingency of sin, had also in view some superior benefit to the race not (so far as we can see) otherwise attainable. Thus at the very outset, according to the only fundamental view of the Divine character warranted, in our opinion, by Scripture, we have an approximate solution of the

problem of probation, with its counterpart, redemption. Moreover we are constrained to apply the same principle of disinterested benevolence to the latter feature of the Divine economy, and say that the final cause or ultimate vindication of the atonement lies in the spontaneous compassion of the Creator himself, who would not be restrained from this sacrifice in order to reclaim his erring creatures. "God so *loved* the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."<sup>1</sup> No other theory of the vicarious death of Jesus Christ appears to us adequate, worthy, or consistent. Whatever other ends were thereby secured, and we grant that these were momentous, if not numerous, they were, in our judgment, but subsidiary and incidental to the one central, overwhelming consideration of gratifying the intense and ineffaceable desire in the Divine mind for the welfare of the beings whom it called into existence. This love, to use human language, could not rest short of proving the extremest remedy possible in behalf of its objects.

We may remark, in passing, that these premises, if correct, afford a sufficient refutation of the Calvinistic doctrine of special election and reprobation; for God is seen to love the human race as such, and to persist in that love despite the depravation of the Fall. The only difference in his love of the good and the bad is that it is complacency toward the one and compassion for the other. Yet we afford no countenance to the opposite error of Universalism, since God is found to respect the freedom of man's will so

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 16.

highly as to hinge probation upon it, and the cross is effectual only as a moral remedy by virtue of its exhibition of the Divine sympathy. The object of redemption is not so much to save from wrath as to make the sinner pure, and this can only be accomplished through his own co-operation.

We set out, as all theological discussions legitimately must, with the basal conception of Deity. But in the Christian view, at least, whatever may be said of the Hebrew, we are not to imagine the Divine Being, even apart from creation, or prior to it, as dwelling in solitary grandeur, without converse or development. The same passion for communication which dawned in creation and culminated on the cross could not have been repressed or lain dormant during the infinite cycles of the preceding eternity. God must be thought of, if an infinite Spirit, as ever essentially the same, and therefore not materially affected even by such astounding revelations of himself as those of creation and redemption. Accordingly we find, in the nearer insight afforded by the New Economy, that the Godhead, although one in substance, is threefold in person, and, for the want of better terms, these are styled respectively the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The real distinction is, of course, to us uncognizable, for if the mystery of our own duplex constitution eludes our most searching scrutiny, how could we be expected to analyze God definitely? Still, the differences between the members of the Trinity are not mere names nor modes of manifestation; they are radical to the

Divine nature. We can only illustrate them, however, by a comparison with the soul, the body, and the spirit of the human being; yet such figures or symbols necessarily fall short of a true definition, as, in the nature of the case, a type is but a picture of the real object. Our understanding of the Divine persons, then, is that the Son is a mediating hypostasis between the Father and the Holy Spirit, which are all equally perfect, divine, and spiritual in their unity of being; and that these terms are merely adopted out of accommodation to human modes of thought and expression, as conveying, by way of simile, an approximate idea of the true relations and interassociation. The only point we are here concerned to develop is, that from all eternity this triune intercommunication furnished a competent field for the mutual outflow and influx of the Divine sympathy; it was and ever is a revelation within the bosom of the Godhead. Yet this view of the ineffable self-sufficiency of Deity within the illimitable range (to use a necessary paradox) of his own society, while it affords us a glimpse of his essential love of communion, does but heighten our amazement at his condescension in widening this social circle, to speak humanly, by the introduction of created beings. All that we clearly know is that the second one of the Trinity, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, and the Christ of the New, is at once the *logos*, or manifested intelligence, (personified light,) of the creative system, and the *lutron*, or atoning victim, (incarnate love,) of the redemptive scheme. Through him only is the Father exhibited,

and he himself is now represented by the Holy Spirit. The idea of revelation has its ground and prophecy in the Divine persons, and we may, therefore, naturally expect the Trinity to be more and more intimately concerned in its unfolding stages.

But the chief reason, amounting to a necessity, for revelation lies on the human side; for although man himself is a microcosm, reflecting in miniature not only the Divine image, but also the rational and even the physical universe, and in that respect is himself a revelation of God, yet is he, both by reason of his limited capacity, and especially through his moral ruin, unable and often unwilling to descry and improve the relations and consequent duties subsisting upon his part toward his Creator and his fellow-creatures. Above all, he is incompetent to ascertain his final destiny, or to divine for himself the means provided for his retrieval. It is, therefore, only reasonable to anticipate that the Being, who had already lavished so many favors upon him, would not leave him destitute of this assistance, without which all the rest must prove abortive. It is, likewise, fair to presume that this revelation would be progressive, as suited to the advancing circumstances and development of the race, and that it would become clearer and more authoritative as its historical *denouement* approached, and as the degeneracy of the ages increased. This feature it will be one of our main concerns to trace.

Finally, from the foregoing discussion it follows, as we at first premised, that God's revelation, written by

human instrumentality, as being the most permanent and unmistakable record of his will, cannot be at variance with the indications of nature, that "elder Scripture writ by God's own hand." This position we emphasize in these days when science and religion are so often said to be opposed to each other. No statement could be more erroneous. In a general way we might appeal for its refutation to the fact that the most devoted scientists have frequently, perhaps generally, been also the most devout Christians. But we may take bolder ground, and deny the possibility of any opposition between these two great branches of human pursuit. Science has to do with the head, and religion chiefly with the heart; no man certainly need be the less pious because he knows more. In reality the conflict exists only between certain deductions of *physics*, or natural science, and particular dogmas of *theology*, or religious science. Now, as neither of these can justly claim to be Divine revelations, but are at best merely human interpretations of Divine indications, we dismiss them here with the simple remark that the same "eternal power and godhead" which are "clearly seen from creation," are likewise the cardinal doctrines of the Bible; but that the plan and successive steps of redemption reveal new beauties in the Divine character, which nature, as an older order of things, fails to disclose. These latter, accordingly, will be our chief field of investigation.

We propose to indicate, first, the general harmony of Divine revelation as found in the various dispensations of successive ages, and then to follow this up

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with a discussion of many details in which the Old and the New Testaments have been said, and perhaps at first sight appear, to be inconsistent with one another. Our aim throughout will be to show, not only the essential identity of true religion in all historic periods, but also the congruity of its most important manifestations, from the germinal principle to the most advanced development.

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## PART I.

### CERTAIN GENERAL FEATURES UNIFORM.

THE earliest lesson of life, and the profoundest deduction of mature philosophy, is the prevalence and supremacy of *law*; and this is so obviously true, both in the natural and the moral realms, that we need not stop to argue it. It is the basis of the Divine administration of the universe, because it is the foundation of the Divine character itself. The heathens have only capricious, because limited, gods, and paganism had no higher conception of the Supreme than arbitrary fate. In the Bible God is seen to be trustworthy because ever actuated by intelligent goodness, and science likewise assures us of permanent and universal forces acting for wise and beneficent ends. It is genuine orthodoxy to identify these co-ordinate powers. Even Calvinism, in the hands of some of its latest and best expounders, is coming to resolve the Divine decrees into the certainty arising from the uniform operation of general laws established by the

great Sovereign.<sup>1</sup> If this be accepted, the core of the old controversy with Arminianism will be substantially extracted. There will only remain the problem of reconciling a special providence with human freedom, or, to state it in bolder form, of showing the compatibility of miracles with intermediate causation; and this is a mystery acknowledged alike by both systems of theology.

Beginning with the oldest class of intelligent creatures, the angels, what little we are informed respecting them shows that they, too, were constituted on the same plan of subjection to law, both natural and spiritual; and the outcome of their probation, however circumstanced or brought about, strongly illustrates both the principles laid down above as fundamental in the Divine economy. The original happiness of them all, and the confirmed blessedness of the good spirits, as it springs from the pure benevolence of the Creator, so, likewise, it is maintained only by a voluntary conformity to God's will or nature; while the ruin and misery of the dæmons consists in their estrangement from the central Source of bliss. Yet law, beneficial because inexorable, reigns alike in either case.

To Adam and Eve, in the garden of Eden, surrounded with all delights which an indulgent Parent could bestow upon a bridal pair, a similar rule was applied, not for the purpose of restricting their liberty or of confining their progress, as the serpent

<sup>1</sup>See Dr. A. A. Hodge, in M'Clintock and Strong's "Cyclopædia," article, "Will, Calvinistic Doctrine of."



diabolically suggested;<sup>1</sup> but in order to develop, by spontaneous exercise, their inherent but negative goodness into conscious and confirmed virtue. It was the love of the sagacious Guardian, who subjects his ward to wholesome discipline, that devised the test and permitted the temptation. We might easily show how admirably adapted was the simple physical form of the prohibition to accomplish this deep moral purpose, and the experience of the child who commits his first sinful act of filial disobedience sufficiently exemplifies the sad knowledge of guilt thus engendered; but we must content ourselves here with a brief allusion to the first mundane dispensation, only remarking that the apparent failure of this, as of each subsequent economy, was a stepping-stone to a higher plane of probation, in which, nevertheless, the same experiment was essentially repeated, but with superior safeguards and with advanced moral results.

The patriarchal period, stretching nearly half way from the creation to the present time, and bridged at equal intervals between the flood and the exode by the call of Abraham, testifies as unequivocally to a prescriptive system of Divine government through tradition and occasional revelation directly, although sporadically, administered, but usually of a less federal character. We may specify notable way-marks along this dimly lighted pathway, which indicate the hedges of law that served by their merciful thorns to warn wanderers upon the long and devious thoroughfare. The caution given to Cain before his fratricide,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. iv, 7.

and the token assigned to him after it,<sup>1</sup> each contained an alternative sufficient to point out the way of duty and safety. The preaching of Noah<sup>2</sup> was a protracted opportunity to avoid the impending punishment of crime, and the precepts delivered to him after the deluge<sup>3</sup> were direct statutes of that covenant of the benevolence of which the rainbow was a beautiful sign.<sup>4</sup> In like manner all the Divine communications to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob involved a compact of mutual fidelity between Jehovah and the chosen family, of which circumcision was the standing corporeal mark; and such remarkable scenes as the furnace-vision<sup>5</sup> and the trial of Abraham,<sup>6</sup> and the ladder<sup>7</sup> and the wrestling<sup>8</sup> of Jacob, were anticipations of the more deeply spiritual economy of later times. Yet all evinced a Fatherly hand guiding, even when chastising, the yet infantile race.

The succeeding dispensation is proverbially designated as the legal, and its all-embracing and minute enactments were enforced by the most awful sanctions; yet our Lord and his apostles have expounded it as being summed up in the one word *love*.<sup>9</sup> The purpose still was the same as in the first revelation in Eden, to lead to Christ; and the whole elaborate, tedious, and burdensome scheme was but a lesson, one that never will be learned but by the experiment, of the insufficiency of human works to improve the heart.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iv, 15.<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii, 19; 2 Pet. ii, 5.<sup>3</sup> Gen. ix, 3, 4.<sup>4</sup> Gen. ix, 16.<sup>5</sup> Gen. xv, 17.<sup>6</sup> Gen. xxii.<sup>7</sup> Gen. xxviii, 12.<sup>8</sup> Gen. xxxii, 24.<sup>9</sup> Matt. xxii, 37-40; Rom. xiii, 8-10; 1 John iii, 11.<sup>10</sup> Gal. iii, 24.

Viewed in any other light, the Mosaic law, however splendid in ritual or imposing in judicature, was a stupendous pageant, having no substantial power beyond the germs of traditionary worship and ethics which it embodied. In the end the fetichism, against which its most frequent if not cardinal injunctions are aimed, was externally cured only to break out in the more subtle idolatry of the heart,<sup>1</sup> which eventually involved the nation itself in the providential and final abolition of their Levitical cultus. The carnal law, written in man's members, prevailed over that recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch, and has left only the imperishable graving of the Decalogue on the conscience by the hand of God.

The Gospel, as we have seen, embodies the law of love as its one essential principle, its source, its method, its power, and its end. Christ told his hearers that he came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it,<sup>2</sup> and he did so by inculcating and personifying the widest and most absolute philanthropy. His sole pleasure was the performance of duty. The will of the Father was his only rule of being or conduct, and the welfare of others his only motive. With him love and law were one. The same is true of his followers precisely in proportion as they are Christians, and the Church exists only to body forth this principle. Voluntary in all its proposals, it proposes nothing but the benediction of man; yet it requires of its members a vow—and this alone—of perpetual and unconditional devotion to the Master.

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v, 17.

Nor in the heavenly world will this law at least be abrogated. Those only who, in the highest human sense, have become "a law unto themselves" can be admitted there. When the principle of love has made itself so fully and permanently dominant in any individual as to be proof against all temptation, then only is that soul fitted for Paradise, or safe if there. This is the law of eternal life. Perfect love is heaven.

Another characteristic feature, more obvious, indeed, because lying on the surface, of all the true dispensations, and measurably of all their heathen counterfeits, is *sacrifice*. This fact we might leave to carry our point by its bare mention, but we dwell upon it for the purpose of bringing out its inner significance, and we shall thus the better appreciate its substantial identity and the different forms which it has successively and legitimately assumed. Sacrifice is but another phase of prayer, and without this idea it is but a meaningless form, a superstitious ceremony. Hence it is every-where divisible into two great classes—sin-offering and thank-offering—corresponding respectively to supplication and praise. We are thus not only prepared to see prayer a constant accompaniment of sacrifice in the earlier dispensations, but in the later and more spiritual, as Christ told the Samaritan woman,<sup>1</sup> we are not surprised to find prayer practically taking the place of sacrifice. Hebrew piety had in many great exigencies<sup>2</sup> anticipated the New Testament doctrine of the

<sup>1</sup> John iv, 21-24.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Dan. ii, 18; Ezra viii, 23; Esther iv, 16.

accumulative efficacy of concertive prayer,<sup>1</sup> and we find, even before the exile, the three forms of prayer — public, domestic, and private — well established.\* But prayer, again, is empty and objectless without faith,<sup>3</sup> and so likewise sacrifice necessarily implies a belief in the power and propitiability of the being in whose honor it is offered. Keeping in mind these points as we rapidly review the divine economy through the ages, we shall see how perfectly they harmonize in their successive developments.

The historical origin of sacrifice is lost in the depths of antiquity. Some have conjectured that it was established by direct command immediately upon the Fall, if not already known in Eden; but we see no trace of it nor occasion for it in the free intercourse of our first parents in their innocence with their Maker.

Certain it is, however, from the instance of Cain and Abel,<sup>4</sup> that thank-offerings at least were then common. It is altogether probable that sacrifices were directly of Divine appointment; at all events, in consequence of this and perhaps prior marks of God's notice, even if of human invention, they were soon understood to be of Divine sanction. From this primitive date they have doubtless spread traditionally over the globe. It is noteworthy, however, that neither Adam nor Cain offered any victim for their sin, nor have we any mention of expiatory sacrifices

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii, 19; James v, 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, 1 Sam. vii, 6; Job i, 5; Psalm lv, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xi, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. iv, 3, 4.

till long after the Flood. The pious of those early ages evidently had direct recourse to the fatherly compassion of their Maker as a relief from guilt and penalty. In this Christians but follow their example, albeit with clearer light and fuller assurances.

The intervention of a third party between the worshiper and God first appears in the history of the patriarchs, such as Abraham and Job, who, by virtue of their headship in the family, were the representatives of their dependents in the act of sacrifice.

In one peculiar case, that of Melchizedek, by reason, doubtless, of his generally accepted sanctity, the regular functions of a wider priesthood were conjoined to the regal position or sheikship. Jethro presents a somewhat similar, but less marked, example. It does not appear, however, that the sacrificial duties were exclusively confined to the oldest member of the family, for we find Jacob, on his way to Padan-aram, as well as on his return, performing sacerdotal acts, such as consecrating pillars and altars, while his father was yet alive. This case, nevertheless, was an exceptional one, and may be accounted for by the patriarchship devolving upon Jacob in Isaac's absence. Now the two important lessons of coincidence between the patriarchal and the later economies, to which we wish to call special attention, are suggested just here, namely, the mediatorial character of religious privileges, and their descent through primogeniture. Both these so strikingly point to the Messianic Redeemer that we need not dwell upon them.

In the succeeding dispensation the sacred functions were confined to the Levitical tribe, and the strict priesthood to the family of Aaron. But this economy, which seems the farthest removed from the direct relations of the Edenic and the Gospel religion, is discovered, in the light of our Lord's and his apostles' exposition, to be the fullest of hints and analogies "of the good things to come," by its types and shadows, especially its simple high-priesthood, and its complicated system of offerings and services. To enter into these in detail would require a volume; we are, therefore, compelled to pass them with this allusion, merely noting the fact, which probably all will admit, and which, if we had space, might be abundantly proved, that the germs, not only of Christianity, but of modern civilization, lie enfolded in Mosaism. We shall presently see that it is a great though popular error to suppose that the Levitical sacrifices were ever intended to expiate real heart sin.

At the crucifixion of Christ the rent veil of the Temple<sup>1</sup> signified the free access of all believers to the innermost presence of God; but a Mediator is still indispensable, and it is only through the heart of Jesus, at that very moment torn asunder with expiatory pangs, that we enter the holiest place.<sup>2</sup> Sacrifice is done away forever by his one atonement, and ritualists alone prate of the mass and the eucharist as the Christian sacrifice. The pristine priesthood of each human soul for itself is restored, and Paradise is regained so far as it can be on earth.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvii, 51.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. x, 20.

But in the heavenly state, although all forms of worship will be dispensed with, and even prayer be merged in praise, and faith in sight, still the atoning Victim will ever remain at his Father's side, the bodily presence of the Saviour will be the Shekinah in the eternal Temple.<sup>1</sup> The mediatorial throne will, indeed, be exchanged for the triumphal, but the song of the redeemed will unceasingly arise "Unto him who hath loved us." The sweetest, truest element of prayer on earth is not so much petition, humiliation, or thanksgiving as simple pure communion of the loving soul with the loving Godhead, free from all selfish wants or hopes or fears; the resting of the head on the Redeemer's breast and the bliss of his conscious presence and inner direct intercourse. This, unalloyed, will be the chief beatitude of heaven.

A third trait of all true piety in human beings since the Fall is *penitence* for sin and sinfulness, whether overt or covert, of act or neglect. This we need not stop to illustrate, since even the false religions of the world have, at least, imitated this virtue of humility, voluntary and hypocritical though it be with them. We name it here only because, when genuine, it is the safest external mark of the return of moral health. There is, of course, no merit in repentance, as there is no reparation even in reformation; but God has seen fit to make it a condition of pardon in the remedial scheme, and we can easily see how futile forgiveness would be, and how impos-

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi, 23.



sible regeneration without it. In conformity with the previous line of discussion, we propose to show that this is characteristic of all stages of divine revelation, and a view of them in this aspect will serve to bring out some facts, not commonly, we think, apprehended.

We have seen that the angels have passed through some sort of probation. For those that failed we know of no second trial and no redemption. By a single decisive crisis the good appear to have reached at once a state of approved virtue and final blessedness, and the bad a condition of confirmed vice and endless misery. Without stopping to inquire wherein this result agrees with or differs from that of human destiny, we may well ask, Why was no salvation provided for the angels? We opine, because, by reason of their superior knowledge and opportunity, a single act of transgression involved incorrigible guilt, analogous to that of the judicially blind or hopeless backsliders referred to in the Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> It would almost seem as if the experiment of their case was varied in that of man by way of improvement, so that we may take the inspired declaration in a literal sense, that man is only less than God, and, therefore, higher in privilege than angels.<sup>2</sup>

The penitence of Adam and Eve after their disobedience is implied in the sacred narrative, since they were respited from the severest part of their physical penalty, and, as we believe, measurably restored to

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii, 31; Rom. i, 28; Heb. vi, 6.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm viii, 5; 1 Cor. vi, 3.

their moral standing through faith in the promised Seed.

Throughout the patriarchal dispensation we have occasional intimations, if not exhibitions, of a penitential spirit in the providential and sometimes direct reproof of the faults of the best characters. Abraham and Isaac were both guilty of prevarication, not without a degree of pusillanimity, with respect to their wives;<sup>1</sup> Jacob is rather notorious for like duplicity in his earlier career; and even the pattern Job had need of severe discipline to perfect his spiritual experience. The manner in which these and less distinguished persons of this period bore their chastisement, such as Noah in his intoxication, Lot in his selection of Sodom as a residence, Judah in his treatment of Tamar,<sup>2</sup> and especially Joseph's brethren in their later conduct toward him,<sup>3</sup> shows that they understood and accepted the moral lesson; and it is a fine trait of Scripture that it fails not to record even these blemishes upon the fair fame of its heroes for the profit of after times.

Under the Mosaic economy we should expect to find clearer illustrations of the healthful influence of religious compunction. Accordingly, not only were the Israelites repeatedly chastised into penitence, but their leaders did not escape the corrective rod. Moses himself, for one public failure in his meekness, was excluded from Canaan, and every Hebrew ruler was made more or less an example of the disciplinary

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xii, 18, 19; xx, 2; xxvi, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xxxviii, 26.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xlii, 21; i, 17.

care of the theocratic Father. The line of judges is but a series of such lessons, and the monarchy abounds with a like moral import. David, the most spiritual of all the kings, was, nevertheless, the most marked subject of repentance; and of other favorites, such as Hezekiah, Jehoshaphat, and Josiah, penitential crises are related in the sacred story with a detail evidently intended to impress the great principle we are endeavoring to bring out.

In several of the great junctures of the period we are now contemplating we have a more forcible reminder of the basal norm to which we have once or twice alluded above, and which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is a key to the Jewish cultus, powerfully evolves, namely, that while "without the shedding of blood there is no remission" of sin, yet "the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin;" whence we are shut up to the conclusion that the one great Sacrifice alone was ever the virtual source of expiatory relief. That the pious Israelite fully understood this higher law is evinced by several memorable acts and sayings of the period under review. Thus, not to speak of the striking reference to the great Teacher in the Mosaic code itself,<sup>1</sup> Samuel declares to the refractory Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice;"<sup>2</sup> and David, in his profoundest contrition, never proposed to offer a bullock on the altar.<sup>3</sup> The Psalms and Isaiah are full of similar anticipations of the evangelical plan of free and full pardon to the penitent, irrespective of priest or

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xviii, 15.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xv, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Psa. li, 16, 17.

shrine or animal victim. In fact, if we carefully examine the Levitical system, we shall find, as we have already intimated, that the transgressions for which a sin-offering is prescribed are only those of a national, conventional, or ceremonial character, and that violations of the moral code are either declared inexpiable altogether, or are left to be condoned by the same great refuge which the guilty conscience has in all ages found alone efficacious, namely, the pardoning mercy of God through Christ. So the saint, whether Jewish or Christian, comes back, in his extremest need, to the common basis of all theology, as we have expounded it, in the bosom of the Trinity.

The contact of Judaism with the great Oriental empires affords us likewise glimpses of similar sentiments prevailing even among the heathen, for the Ninevites spontaneously repented at the preaching of Jonah, although he held out no hope of reprieve; and Nebuchadnezzar was constrained, in the midst of his pride, to pay homage to Jehovah, whose prophet had predicted his humiliating lunacy.<sup>1</sup>

At the opening of the Gospel message repentance was the burden of John the Baptist's proclamation, and the self-convicted Jews of his day submitted, with an alacrity and unanimity surprising, when we consider their national bigotry and intestine sectarianism, to the baptism which they must have understood as prefiguring a new life.

A survey of these historical coincidences prompts the deeper inquiry as to the essential connection

<sup>1</sup> Dan. iv, 27.

between contrition of heart and conversion of soul. We need not search far for an answer. Whether we adopt the Calvinian or the Arminian statement of the relative order of these phases of religious experience, we must substantially unite in ascribing them, at least germinally and potentially, to divine influence; and we must regard them as but the successive stages of a process of moral renovation. Genuine penitence is, therefore, the precursor and promise, or else the sure concomitant and fruit, of all true devotion.

If this relation be so vital, we cannot think that it will cease with the initial point of a saintly life, nor even with the present state of existence, but must continue in some form likewise in the heavenly world. We hold, therefore, that, in accordance with a well-known law of the human mind, the contrast between earthly frailty and celestial perfection will enhance the bliss of the finally saved. While memory holds sway, the consciousness of past misdeeds cannot be obliterated; but inasmuch as their effects will then have been effaced, their recollection will but add another strain in the eternal halleluiah, "Unto him who hath . . . washed us in his own blood."

On the other hand there is a "sorrow which worketh death," and the despair of the finally lost, which was foreshadowed in the cry of Esau<sup>1</sup> and the suicide of Judas, and is not seldom illustrated in the horror of a hopeless death-bed, is but the reverse action of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xii, 17.

the salutary law above stated. Affliction is beneficial only when sanctified through divine grace. The fire that melts the iron case-hardens the steel, and grief, when it does not soften the spirit into filial docility, maddens the heart into fiendish rebellion.

The only other broad mark of a common authorship which we shall point out as characteristic of the successive divine revelations lies in their *theophanies*, which we perceive to be gradually expanding, but ever correspondent. All religions have had their peculiar manifestation of gods, but in the majority of faiths these have been in contemptible or shocking forms, while a few religionists, such as the Parsees and the Hindus, have symbolized Deity by an element or an abstraction. The Bible alone, if we except the Koran, which is its mimic, has befitting external representations of God. The delicacy of this attempt renders its successful achievement an interesting study. The most normal of the Old Testament appearances are those in which Jehovah assumed the semblance of an angel. We have been pictorially and poetically trained to conceive of these beings as winged ethereal youths, with floating form and dazzling drapery, although there is little foundation for these features of their representation. But as no spectator has minutely described them, we are almost wholly at a loss for details. This is probably fortunate, for idolatry has seized, not merely in art, but in earnest, upon the little thus divulged. Suffice it for our purpose that God has not left himself wholly with-

out witness, even to the ocular cravings of man. The merely audible manifestations of himself, as in Eden, to Abraham and to Samuel,<sup>1</sup> we pass over as less emphatic, and so likewise the symbol of fire.<sup>2</sup> The cherubim were merely imaginary shapes, being emblems of the Divine attributes, taken from the four leading types of animal nature.

The wheels in Ezekiel are an Assyro-Babylonian appendage. All such embodiments the Decalogue in its opening sentences, and the Mosaic law by detailed enactment, prohibit from liturgical imitation. We notice these physical manifestations here, partly because, as revelations of God ostensibly in the most patent guise, they are eminently legitimate to our theme, but chiefly because of their significance as adumbrations of the incarnation.

The more frequent mode of depicting God in Scripture is through visions, which, of course, take on the aspect of each human medium's idiosyncrasy. The general type is evidently the above traditionary conception of the angel, but it is magnified and clarified, with many accessions. Such are the well known theophanies of Isaiah, Daniel, and John.<sup>3</sup> The one vouchsafed to the Israelitish elders<sup>4</sup> is more grand, but shadowy; while that granted to Moses alone<sup>5</sup> is still more indistinctly described. The transfiguration of Jesus and his appearances to Stephen and Paul are

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii, 8; xxii, 11; 1 Sam. iii, 4, 6, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xv, 17; Exod. iii, 2; xiii, 21; xix, 18; Judg. xiii, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. vi, 1-3; Dan. vii, 9, 10; Rev. i, 13, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxiv, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xxxiii, 18-23.

but adaptations of the Shekinah and anticipations of the glorified state.

In this connection, however, we must not overlook that most remarkable scene of Jacob's wrestling at the brook Jabbok,<sup>1</sup> in which the God-man is clearly revealed in advance; and for its best spiritual exposition we may refer to Charles Wesley's beautiful hymn on the theme. Glimpses of the same condescending mystery are disclosed in the amazing intercessions of Abraham and Moses,<sup>2</sup> and in the startling interviews vouchsafed to Joshua and Manoah.<sup>3</sup>

But all the foregoing theophanies, magnificent as was their coloring, are thrown quite into the shade by the incarnate Word, in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." For a whole life-time he tabernacled in human flesh, and moved about among men, the outflashing of the divine glory, and the very mark of God's substance.<sup>4</sup> Jesus declared that mortals had neither heard the Father's voice at any time, nor seen his shape;<sup>5</sup> yet he said to his disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."<sup>6</sup> Christ was not merely a revealer of God, nor yet simply a revelation from God, he was God himself revealed to man; "God was in him, reconciling the world unto himself."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxxii, 24-31.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. xviii, 16-33; Exod. xxxii, 7-14; xxxiii, 12-23.

<sup>3</sup> Josh. v, 13-15; Judg. xiii, 18.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. i, 3.

<sup>5</sup> John iv, 9.

<sup>6</sup> John v, 37.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. v, 19.



Here the whole Deity is known ;  
Nor dares a creature guess,  
Which of the glories brighter shone—  
The justice or the grace.

Here, then, we may study the Divine lineaments at our leisure, and scan the otherwise inexpressible features of the Godhead. Poetry and art have exhausted themselves in their effort to represent to the eye and the imagination the "majestic sweetness" which "sat enthroned upon the Saviour's brow ;" but, after all, the unaffected portraiture by the four Evangelists convey the best image of the Redeemer to the appreciative reader. It seems to us, at this distance of time and circumstance, that if mankind could but look upon that loving face, and hear that tender voice, their adoration would be commanded ; but we know that such was not the effect upon all who did enjoy that privilege. Some, perhaps all those morally susceptible, were thus constrained, but many went from that superlative presence with diabolical hate, to deride, to malign, and to plot against the sacred life. True there was in the gloom of Christ's special humiliation a hiding of the Divine power that abode within him, but in the moments of his deepest passion there never failed to be elicited, by the slightest touch of human sympathy, the scintillations of the divinity with which his humanity was fully charged. It is hard, in so perfectly rounded a character and career, to point out any specially salient feature : subjected to every test which the ingenuity of that

or later ages has been able to apply, the picture only comes forth the more faultless, until it has come itself to be confessed the greatest miracle of all, equally conclusive for all time. We shall not attempt to retouch the inspired canvas, lest we mar its mellow tone, or add false hues to its tints. We have only to say, Look upon it attentively, and if it does not impress your heart as "a thing of beauty and a joy forever," then you must be more insensible than Nicodemus at night, or the blind man at the pool of Siloam, or the officers sent by the Sanhedrin to arrest the Nazarene Teacher, or the centurion at the cross, who all acknowledged that God was portrayed in Him. We may be permitted, however, to linger upon the charming stereoscopic for the purpose of pointing out one or two lines through which the soul of the God-man seems to us to look forth most expressively, and at the same time to trace these as bolder shadings of the earlier limnings.

In order to be the paragon of revelation it was needful that Jesus Christ should exhibit as the Son of God all that is effable of divine condescension, and as the Son of Man a peerless specimen of human nobleness; on no other plane could the extremes meet without compromise. Now if we sound these requirements to the bottom we shall discover underlying them, if we mistake not, two elements, mutually enhancing each other, but both composing what is the most surprising and, to the natural mind, incomprehensible, substratum of the history of the

Redeemer; namely, his pure unselfishness and his perfect balance; and these ally him with the magnanimity which we have seen to characterize all the steps of creation and redemption. Never raising a finger for his own comfort or defense, he put forth his omnipotence for the relief of the humblest petitioner; careless of his own ease, he labored ceaselessly for the welfare of others; and at last he died in unutterable anguish, that a guilty and ungrateful world might live in bliss supernal.

Such a spectacle puts all merely human instances of philanthropy altogether out of comparison. Yet, while undergoing this fearful ordeal, he never made a slip in temper, word, or deed, as the best of his imitators have occasionally done. It was only because he was truly God, as well as perfect man, that he could successfully achieve either of these tasks; and it was his utter disregard of himself that maintained his absolute self-possession. In like manner it is the inconceivable equipoise of God, in the exercise of his natural and moral attributes, which excites our profoundest admiration; and it is his astounding prodigality, in originating and saving our race, which enlists our warmest affection. The bare statement of such a theology is its highest and sufficient argument; and, as the opponents of the mythical theory have well insisted, the merely human construction of such a life as that of Jesus is incredible and impossible. Viewed from this common center, each of the Bible economies commends itself to the rational conscience as a well-rounded

verity differing only from the others in its radial sweep.

We are often inclined to wish that it were our privilege nowadays to see the Saviour with our own eyes, to drink in the luxury of his personal presence, and catch the inspiration direct from his lips. We have indeed the record of his life and deeds and sayings, and to this, of which we shall treat subsequently, we may have perpetual recourse; but we are apt to imagine that his immediate instruction would be far more full and satisfactory.

We forget that we have something even better. Jesus told his disciples, distressed by the thought of his bodily absence, that it was expedient for them that he should go away, in order that they might have the permanent company of the Comforter as his representative.<sup>1</sup> Were he physically on earth to-day, he could be present with only a small circle of his followers at a time, and that only in an outward sense; whereas the Holy Spirit is in the most intimate communion with each believer at all times. This is a theophany which far transcends in real value and power all previous revelations. It requires, indeed, to be interpreted by the objective rules of Scripture, as the apocalypse of both the Old and New Testaments needed an angelic explanation.<sup>2</sup> It is also a manifestation which the spiritually minded only can understand;<sup>3</sup> but to these it is inexpressibly precious, and it is the final, because

<sup>1</sup> John xvi, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Dan. x, 10-14; Rev. xvii, 7, etc.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ii, 10, 11.

direct and absolute, proof of the divinity of Christianity. We greatly mistake the older economies if we suppose that the manifestations of the Spirit of God were wanting in them. On the contrary, as we shall eventually show, these influences are conspicuous, from the brooding over primeval chaos,<sup>1</sup> down through the visions and the inspiration as well as the aspirations and experiences of the patriarchs, psalmists, seers, and saints of olden times to the days of Elizabeth and Zacharias, of Simeon and Anna.<sup>2</sup> But after the Ascension, or rather upon the memorable Pentecost, when what might properly be called the dispensation of the Spirit was inaugurated, these manifestations were the common privilege of all true believers; and in their richest, deepest sense they have continued to be so to the present day, however much they may have been neglected in worldly and carnal periods or Churches.

Finally, we remark that the open vision of what we now see as in a mirror obscurely is reserved for the heavenly state, glimpses of which the Revelator saw in the city without temple or light, save the Lamb himself.<sup>3</sup> Here culminate in perfect fulfillment all the types and metaphors of the earthly dispensations. The same apostle, nearest to the Master's heart, sums up all our information as to those glories in the declaration, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."<sup>4</sup> With this we can afford to rest content.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i, 41-67; ii, 25-27, 36-38.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi, 22, 23.

<sup>4</sup> 1 John iii, 2.

Divine love could propose nothing better for a creature than to make him eventually a copy of his own brightest image.

As it is not claimed for revelation in any of its forms that it is a scheme of optimism, we are not bound to account for the existence of evil, any more than natural philosophers are. We simply accept that fact as one of every-day experience, which the Scriptures, however, teach us how to explain in part, and in part how to avert.

We have thus taken, not an exhaustive survey of all the general principles in which the successive forms of divine revelation agree, but sufficient to show that God's methods of procedure in the moral treatment of man adown the ages, varied as it has been to suit the progress of society, has ever been upon a uniform and consistent plan, and that the radical idea has unchangeably been a benevolent one. It remains to be seen whether the same design has been as constantly observed in the details.

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## PART II.

### DETAILED AGREEMENT IN THE TWO TESTAMENTS.

We have purposely reserved the subject of written revelation for a separate and more minute discussion, and to this we now direct our attention. The two main sections into which it naturally falls are indicated by the above caption ; subordinate divisions will

be inclusively considered so far as is important for our purpose.

Alleged contradictions between individual books or particular statements in different or the same books have been abundantly explained and satisfactorily reconciled in commentaries and special treatises, so that they need not be repeated here. The obvious correspondences in the form of the two sections, such as the historical books being supplemented by the practical, the prosaic complemented and interfused by the poetic element, the interplay of the human and the divine authorship, and the far-reaching sense by reason of the gradual unfolding through successive cycles of history and circumstance, all these, among other literary characteristics, need here only be hinted at. We might largely account for such external resemblances between the Old Testament and the New by their continuity of national origin; for although stretching over a vast range of time and region, the Shemitic thought and even style is almost as transparent in the Hellenistic Greek as in the Hebrew or Aramaic. But this community of ethnic base would not adequately explain the more recondite points of agreement between Judaism and Christendom, when we take into account their violent severance at first and their still wider estrangement afterward in civil and ecclesiastical position. It is necessary to trace their tap-root in the same divine principles which presided over both administrations, and we shall then perceive that they were equally, but in an advancing degree, designed as guides and helps out of native

depravity into a conformity with the divine nature. But, from whatever cause arising, our design will be to delineate somewhat at length those common features of the two systems, so far as these legitimately flow from their sacred books respectively, which have most widely and deeply stamped themselves upon the face of the world. The essay, we hope, if it do not silence the manifold gainsayers of this day, will, at least, tend to confirm the believer, by showing him with what a goodly company of older pilgrims he is marching along the one way cast up for the ransomed from earth to heaven.

In this discussion we begin with certain matters of fact which, it has been alleged, argue a dereliction in ethical principles under the old economy as compared with the new. We propose to advance along the line of conventional usages in which the two economies approach each other, until we reach those aspirations for a higher intellectual and spiritual life in which they alike, though in different degree, culminate. We may remark in general upon this whole class of objections, that it is hardly fair to try Hebrew saints by Christian rules; nevertheless we accept the challenge, and proceed with the vindication.

The first religious institution or observance on record is the *Sabbath*, and the character and extent of its obligation have been much discussed, especially in these later days.

We are concerned with it here as it belongs in common to both the Old and the New Dispensations, and, as we hope to show, on precisely the same moral



basis. We are not of those who regard it as a mere ceremony or usage, whether ecclesiastical or civil : it has its roots in the constitution of man, and is necessary for the proper ethical culture of the race. Its being in the Decalogue, and that in the first table, shows that it was not purely a Jewish ordinance, and the words with which it is there introduced, "Remember the Sabbath day," clearly point to its Edenic origin and its acknowledged authority in earlier Hebrew history. It is true, there is little evidence of its careful observance during the patriarchal period, and hence the need of its emphatic restatement in the Mosaic law, and of its re-enforcement under that code by special penalties, and with extra strictness, which latter features are to be regarded as of force only among Jews.

There is, on the other hand, decided evidence of its frequent neglect among the Israelites themselves, especially in the lax administration of the idolatrous monarchs ; but the same may be said of other Mosaic institutions, and even of circumcision, the seal of the Abrahamic covenant, which fell into disuse for a long time under the very eye of Moses, and in his own family.<sup>1</sup> The attempt has often been made to disparage the Sabbath, from the fact that our Lord never cites this among the Ten Commandments, but often rebukes the sectaries of his day in this matter ; his conduct in this, however, only shows that he was opposed to the Pharisaic punctilio, and especially the rabbinical additions then prevalent, for he was himself, as like-

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iv, 25 ; Josh. v, 7.

wise his followers, so far as the record goes, a careful observer of the day in its genuine spirit. His famous saying, "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day,"<sup>1</sup> points in the same direction, and by no means abrogates the institution. Accordingly the Christian Church has universally maintained the obligation of the Sabbath, but has avoided the Judaic austerity connected with it. The pristine and true design of this institution is to afford one day's rest from secular pursuits each week for the purpose of religious improvement, and to this Christendom, no less than Judaism, has unanimously adhered, in theory at least. The change of the day from the seventh to the first, in honor of our Lord's resurrection, and as a matter of convenience at first, makes no essential difference in this regard, but is altogether consonant with the more spiritual idea of Christianity.

The oldest social institution, *marriage*, which lies at the basis of all the domestic relations, and of society itself, has been the occasion of some of the most marked strictures upon the Hebrew as compared with the Christian system. Polygamy was certainly practiced by the patriarchs, and tolerated by Judaism, but is expressly and totally proscribed by Christianity. Even the disciples of our Lord observed the striking contrast in this respect between his teaching and that of the Old Testament, and his enemies were not slow to object to this contradiction.<sup>2</sup> Jesus, however, readily obviated this discrepancy by the plain distinction between a custom temporarily per-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v, 31, 32; xix, 8-10.

mitted and a principle eventually enforced. Polygamy, like promiscuous divorce, with which it is closely related, was not originally devised, nor ever really sanctioned, by Mosaism. On the contrary, the Jewish law hedged marriage in by so many restrictions and defenses that, practically, the Jews rarely, except a few of the rich or aristocracy, had more wives than one. The kings did so in direct violation of statute.<sup>1</sup> It was the pernicious legislation of the Talmud that chiefly led to the immoralities of later times in this respect. The primitive law of monogamy for life, which had for a time and to a considerable degree been overslaughed by Oriental sensuality, was at length restored and perpetuated.

Similar remarks apply to *slavery*, another immoral practice inherited by Mosaism from patriarchal times. The sacred Lawgiver, for reasons obviously prudential, preferred the slow but sure process of restriction, in this case likewise, to that of direct prohibition; so that in the issue we find, in point of fact, that slaveholding was very uncommon among the Jews, growing less and less to the end of the polity. Our Lord and his apostles pursued a parallel course in refraining from open rebuke of the shameless slavery then prevalent among heathen nations, and contenting themselves with inculcating the principle of a peaceful and permanent abolition. There have, indeed, been learned divines, even of our own day, who have sought to vindicate the Old Testament on the opposite line of reasoning, and have stoutly maintained

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xvii, 17

that slavery is right in itself, and, therefore, sanctioned also by the New Testament; but the common sense of mankind has at length condemned their social sophism, and a just exegesis has exploded their theological error. The Bible now appears to candid expositors a unit on this moral question, although varying, as in other matters, to suit the civil condition of its subjects.

A feeble effort has sometimes been made to set the two sections of the Scriptures at variance with each other, or at least with the principles of morality, on the subject of *intemperance*. Wine is often represented in the Old Testament as a blessing, and its use is indirectly commended; but that this refers to the weak wines of Palestine, in their natural state, mild as those of proper vine-growing countries usually are, is evident from the almost invariable contrast with the term "strong drink," which we may conclude means generally the more highly alcoholic or artificial beverages made to stimulate and gratify the palate of hard drinkers; and that the moderate use of such wine is alone approved is certain from the many and severe denunciations of drunkenness which appear throughout the Old Testament. A similar view prevails in the New Testament; for Jesus drank wine, and even miraculously supplied it, and St. Paul recommends its sparing use to Timothy;<sup>1</sup> but no mercy is shown to excessive drinking or intoxication. Some extremists may contend that this does not harmonize with the doctrine of total abstinence. They seem to

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v, 23.

overlook another important distinction, which the New Testament brings prominently out, namely, the duty of refraining, for the sake of example, from many indulgences perfectly lawful in themselves.<sup>1</sup> Christians have no right to abuse their liberty so as to endanger others ; and on this ground society, likewise, has a right to protect itself by prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors. Here, therefore, as every-where else, the Scriptures are found, on candid and careful examination, to be perfectly consistent, not only with themselves, but with sound ethics and the sovereign law of love.

A more plausible objection to many parts of the Old Testament is founded upon the *warfare* which is not only copiously narrated but even encouraged, and in some cases positively enjoined, therein, issuing in scenes of individual bloodshed and wholesale massacre, abhorrent not only to Christianity but to humanity itself. We say nothing of the judges. David and the later kings engaged in sanguinary battles, with a patriotic aim in general, it is true, but with many unnecessary atrocities. All of these may be excused as acts resting upon their own personal responsibility, but what are we to think of Moses and Joshua slaughtering their foes without quarter ; and how are we to reconcile it with the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic directions to love, forgive, and benefit our enemies ? The extermination of the Canaanites especially has been a stumbling-block to unbelievers, and sometimes to believers. Now, we

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. viii.

apprehend that all these so-called enormities are to be explained not by mitigation or apology, but as acts performed by direct divine authority, in the nature of summary executions upon a guilty community. The Israelites may have taken personal satisfaction in these retributive deeds, although for such a feeling they could show neither commandment nor commendation ; but, whether pleasant or not, the thing had to be done, and they were expressly charged by Jehovah with its performance as a most solemn duty. This shifts the whole responsibility upon the divine shoulders, so to speak, and there we may safely leave it, together with all the horrors of famine, pestilence, earthquake, and other natural inflictions, which involve the innocent babe with the guilty parent. Butler's "Analogy" is our sufficient answer here, and the very title of his immortal book is apt to our main purpose. In particular cases, such as the sin of Achan, the general doom upon the heathen was aggravated by a special treachery, which was visited with even more condign military punishment ; but wherever we can discover the evidence of divine command or sanction for the severities under consideration, that very fact removes them from the sphere of human prudence or passion, and relegates them to the province of a higher administration. That this is the correct view is plain from the penalties inflicted upon the Israelites themselves whenever they were remiss in executing the divine commission. The whole history of the judges is a prolonged example. Take a briefer and more pointed one, which throws a flood of light upon this

whole question, and brings it into striking conformity with New Testament ideas of equity. Saul, a bitter warrior, was finally rejected as king for neglecting to exterminate the Amalekites;<sup>1</sup> while Samuel, whose rule was inaugurated with a victory without a fight,<sup>2</sup> cut the spared Agag to pieces with his own hands<sup>3</sup>—the only blood with which they were ever stained, except that of animal victims. David, on the other hand, was debarred from touching the sacred stones of the projected temple because he had shed human blood,<sup>4</sup> albeit ever in prosecution of patriotic and theocratic designs. The later prophets, especially Isaiah, in their glowing descriptions of the peaceful reign of the Messiah, still more clearly indicate the divine intention of abolishing the sanguinary dispensation as soon as society should become prepared for the change.<sup>5</sup> In short, war, like polygamy and slavery, properly belongs to the barbaric period preceding Mosaism; and modern experience has proved how hard it is for Christianity itself to shake off this heirloom of darker ages. A fighting saint is an anomaly, a monstrosity, under any dispensation; but alas! the Church of every time has been full of such, from Constantine to Cromwell. We hope it will yet become an anachronism.

Kindred with this topic is that of *revenge*, which is thought to be promoted by the Hebrew *lex talionis* and blood-feud rules. These, however, are evidently customs handed down from a nomadic age, which were

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xv, 18, 23.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. vii, 10.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xv, 33.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Chron. xxii, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. ii, 4; xi, 6-9; Micah iv, 3.

too inveterate to be eradicated suddenly, and were, therefore, put under magisterial supervision, so as to prevent capricious and tumultuary vengeance. The Jewish criminal code is in this respect a great advance upon all other Oriental, or at least Shemitic, modes of procedure.

While reviewing this subject we must not overlook the famous objection of *imprecations* uttered in Holy Writ, and that by noted saints. We might dismiss them with a like remark to that above, namely, that if pronounced by divine inspiration, these are no more objectionable than God's direct imprecations of his enemies, which are often recorded in Scripture;<sup>1</sup> but if, on the other hand, they are merely human, the Bible is not responsible for them, except for their correct record. But we take higher ground. A man must be something less than human, certainly much less than a saint, if he could see the abominations practiced by the heathen of those days, and not feel his soul stirred to an indignation which could not more appropriately vent itself than by execration of the offenders. For example, David, in Psalm cix, curses the miscreant Doeg for the assassination of the priests,<sup>2</sup> and every righteous heart will say Amen. It should be noted, moreover, that these scriptural imprecations are not the expressions of personal malice against either masses or individuals, but a reference of their case to Almighty retribution, and thus they strictly conform to the ethic principle announced in common by both Testaments,

<sup>1</sup> For example, Gen. iv, 11; Deut. xxvii, *passim*.    <sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xxii, 18.



"Vengeance belongeth unto Jehovah."<sup>1</sup> That the innocent should sometimes be involved in the fate of the guilty in these retributive sentences is no more, as we have already seen, than is usual in natural providence. We go higher still, therefore, in our vindication, and claim that the punishment of sin, whether directly by the Divine hand or by human instrumentality, is but a prophylactic measure of true love for the race at large, and that this is the real motive which actuates God himself in providing a hell for the lost. It is in order to save the rest that the philanthropist removes the criminal from society; but the sheriff, who takes the murderer's life, treats him otherwise as humanely as he would a maniac. Neither God nor the Bible ever exhibits unnecessary severity, much less cruelty, although man may misdeem it such. Nay, the more ardent and immediate this love, the more rigid and prompt his discipline, as the example of Job in the Old Testament and many maxims in the New testify.<sup>2</sup>

But in no case is there to be imagined malevolence in the Divine mind. A similar qualification, and one not more difficult to apprehend, prevails in the seemingly vindictive passages of the Bible, from the self-restraint of the Jews in not plundering the murderous Persians under Esther,<sup>3</sup> to the apocalyptic wail for the downfall of hostile Babylon,<sup>4</sup> which is copied from Ezekiel's lament over that of domineering Tyre.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxxii, 35; Psa. xciv, 1; Rom. xii, 19.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Heb. xii, 5-11; Rev. iii, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Esth. ix, 10, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xviii.

<sup>5</sup> Ezek. xxvii.

The only other ethical objection which we will here notice is drawn from the somewhat frequent and occasionally startling instances of *duplicity* that occur in the Old Testament, such as the prevarication of Abraham and Isaac about their wives, the falsehood and chicanery of Jacob concerning the birth-right and in his bargains with Laban, David's double dealing with the Philistines, etc.<sup>1</sup> Most or all of these may be met by the frank admission of their wrongfulness, and the fact that Scripture not only does not commend them, but clearly points out the mishaps which they entailed upon all concerned in them.

Sometimes, however, the explanation is more difficult, because the divine authority appears at first sight to be implicated, as in the instance of the old prophet of Bethel, who deluded his brother prophet into disobedience;<sup>2</sup> but even here a careful inspection of the narrative will show that, whether the falsehood were uttered from good or bad motives, Jehovah did not prompt it.<sup>3</sup> All such instances only prove, what every one knows full well, that good men have their faults, and that even inspiration is no guaranty of perfect moral integrity. Mendacity is a proverbial failure of Orientals, and the Bible would not be true to the times and manners which it re-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xxvii, 8-12.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings xiii.

<sup>3</sup> The commendation of Jael's treacherous act (Judg. v, 24) is such only from a military point of view. "Leges silent inter arma." Sisera had no right to presume upon her neutrality, and she gave him no guaranty except by implication.

counts if it did not contain specimens of it. The New Testament exhibits them likewise; but the falsehood of Ananias and Sapphira received a terrible rebuke,<sup>1</sup> and the dissimulation of Peter and Barnabas was promptly reprov'd by another apostle.\* When, however, there is an attempt, as we have heard made, to fasten a strain of untruthfulness upon the sinless Jesus, by asserting that he acted with duplicity in concealing himself from Mary Magdalene at the sepulcher,<sup>3</sup> and from the disciples at Emmaus,<sup>4</sup> we wholly demur, for non-committal is not falsehood, nor reticence a lie. Many of the alleged cases of insincerity in the Bible, such as the acceptance of the Egyptians' jewels by the Israelites, (not borrowing with a promise of return,)<sup>5</sup> the military feint at Ai,<sup>6</sup> and others in the old economy, or in later times Paul's shrewd conduct before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem,<sup>7</sup> fall under the same category, and have been abundantly vindicated by commentators. In fine, unswerving truthfulness is every-where held up in Scripture as the only worthy standard, but it is not pretended that even good men—excepting the Lord Jesus Christ alone<sup>8</sup>—have always and constantly kept up to it. This, we submit, is a common-sense view, and we think that Holy Writ pursues a

<sup>1</sup> Acts v, 1-11.<sup>2</sup> Gal. ii, 11-14.<sup>3</sup> John xx, 14.<sup>4</sup> Luke xxiv, 16.<sup>5</sup> Exod. xii, 35, 36. The Hebrew word rendered "borrowed" means only *asked*.<sup>6</sup> Josh. viii, 4-7.<sup>7</sup> Acts xxiii, 6, 7.<sup>8</sup> John viii, 46.

similar rational method on all the ethical points adduced.

In nothing, perhaps, would we naturally look for a more marked divergence between the Old and the New Testaments than in their *ceremonial* arrangements and observances; and yet even here the parallelism will, on a nearer view, be found to be singularly close in the most vital particulars. This is true, not simply because, as we have shown before, the cultus is based upon the same spiritual ideas, but it extends even to the main appliances and general objectivity of worship, so much so that the very form of the later may be said to have grown out of the earlier in all essential respects. Thus the church service is plainly traceable to that of the synagogue.

We call attention to two points only, waiving all stress upon the sanctuary and regular services on prescribed days, which features may be said to be common to most religions.

A divinely appointed ministry is equally insisted upon in Mosaism and in Christianity. The Aaronic priesthood and the Levitical assistants, it is true, were fixed by birth in a particular family and tribe, but these were directly selected by God in lieu of the first-born of the Israelites at large,<sup>1</sup> and so a special designation occurred, tantamount to the individual calling of Gospel preachers and pastors. The apostle distinctly compares the two dispensations in this respect by saying, "No man taketh this honor unto himself,"<sup>2</sup> as is done in all

<sup>1</sup> Num. iii, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. v, 4.

other religious bodies, except these two and the Bible patriarchs. By retaining this in his own hands, God holds the key to the whole system of ecclesiastical functions as effectually as he did under the theocracy, and thus all the chicanery and cunningly devised fables of human ritualism are excluded so long as this cardinal prerogative is duly maintained. The public officiator is necessarily the central figure and prime regulator of every cult. We may add that the holy oil of the high-priest's consecration symbolizes the unction of the Holy Spirit, without which no Christian minister is qualified for his work.

Again, amid all the variety of Old Testament ordinances, we can easily distinguish two rites as personally and indispensably the most obligatory, namely, circumcision, which was the token of the Abrahamic covenant, and the Passover, which was superadded at the birth of the Israelitish nation. Precisely so in Christendom baptism is universally recognized as the initiatory pledge, once only to be taken for life, while the Eucharist is a constant memorial of allegiance to the Master. There are particulars, we admit, in which these sacraments do not perfectly correspond to the Jewish, but they are their obvious and characteristic counterparts. In every age they have respectively been the badges of either communion. Without a country or a temple or a priest the Karaite to-day clings to his two signs of nationality clear as the lineaments of Hebrew descent, and the Protestant scrupulously celebrates his two sole rites,

with whatever variety of creed or polity. It is the Bible, unadulterated by tradition, that holds each to his simple faith and practice.

The prominence of these ceremonies invites to a more particular comparison of the emblems involved in them, and we shall find instruction in the coincidences as well as the variations. Of circumcision, as of baptism, the chief signification is purification; in the former, by the removal of a membrane which, especially in hot climates, is liable to retain unhealthy excretions; in the latter, by the washing away of personal defilement. Both are corporal, but the one is carnal, and limited to the male sex as representative, while the other is more refined in its conception, and suited to all human beings and to all climes. So, also, the paschal meal, like the Lord's Supper, has material elements, the roasted lamb and the herb-sauce; solid and liquid food, both in a prepared or artificial form, answering to the unleavened bread and the fermented grape-juice, and representing the bruised but unmutilated flesh and the shed but uncoagulated blood of the atonement; and these point back to the appetite by which Eden was lost. But the New Testament symbols are again less gross than those which they supersede, and not being putrefactive, they are better adapted to permanent and world-wide use. In both cases the initial ceremony has a single physical base, while the continuative is duplex as befits the corroborative nature of the latter. But the household of faith is more restricted than the lineage of sight, and only the children

of a divine regeneration receive the true spiritual seal and aliment in either dispensation.

We may remark, in passing, that the mistake of the Friends in eschewing all ceremony and ecclesiastical form was but a reaction from papistical excess, and hence, despite the many and great moral virtues of the sect, which have widely leavened the Protestant community, and will thus survive the decadence of the denomination, history will record that their tenets are not in genuine accord with the spirit of the Reformation. As to external pomp, they are not the only ones who have proved that a straight coat or a close bonnet may embody as much tenacity to form as splendid churches or a magnificent ritual; and as to inner light, the Word of God they, like all others, have found to be the only preservative from fanaticism on the one hand and freethinking on the other.

While the *civilizing influences* of Christianity are, in modern times and even by infidel writers, fully acknowledged and often loudly applauded, those of Judaism are frequently overlooked or depreciated: yet in this respect likewise the Mosaic institutes, if candidly judged, will appear favorably. Statesmanship is a mark of genius not always possessed by men of otherwise commanding talent and exalted position, but the Hebrew nation, despite their isolation and bigotry, had lessons of a cosmopolitan breadth in civil and political economy, which not only prepared the way for the ample scope of the Gospel, but placed the Jews, as such, far in advance of heathen

communities. In point of patriotism they have never been exceeded in history; yet, intense as this was, it will be found to have been tempered and mingled with a regard for the rights of others, and this beyond their own pale, which is rare, if not totally absent, in neighboring and contemporaneous peoples. On the other hand, Christendom, under the operation of similar elevating sentiments, while not deficient in the love of native land, yet extends its sympathy in philanthropic missions to the world at large. The spirit of the patriarchs, who were pilgrims and sojourners seeking a better home,<sup>1</sup> was imitated by the pious Hebrew of every age, no less than by the Christian saint.

The broad basis on which Mosaism and Christianity are thus found to approximate is the doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man, derived germinally from the history of the common origin of the race, but confirmed, illustrated, and sharpened by many special precepts. The dogma, "Thou shalt love thy fellow (Jew) and hate thy enemy, (the Gentile,)"<sup>2</sup> was not legitimately drawn from the Old Testament, but was an unauthorized gloss of the rabbins; and the assent of the lawyer to the moral of our Lord's parable of the good Samaritan<sup>3</sup> was a spontaneous tribute to the genuine spirit of the Mosaic law, and an unconscious rebuke of the sectarianism of the times.

That law is full of injunctions to treat foreigners fairly, not merely on the ground of humanity, but

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v, 43.

<sup>3</sup> Luke x, 37.



likewise of public policy ; and many detailed provisions were made to engender and foster this liberal spirit.<sup>1</sup>

The rights of citizenship, of course, could not be promiscuously extended to aliens, but naturalization was easy, and political privileges were bounded by no caste or rank or station. Even under the monarchy, republicanism substantially prevailed in all local affairs, and the humblest subject was protected in his person, property, and franchise, so far as the rightful law could avail. Bating Orientalism, the Puritans were not very far astray in taking their civil and criminal code from the Old Testament. It is doubtful if the principles of European and American jurisprudence, which are drawn from the Roman Pandects, will ever be fully modernized and Christianized until they are collated with the same standard.

We have already alluded to the moral law as the basis of all communal ethics. The New Testament, although by no means intended as a digest of constitutional, statutory, or judicial procedure, and in its own day carefully abstaining from all direct interference with politics, has nevertheless, in a like silent manner, molded the counsels of the nations that now rule the globe ; and it is destined to do so more and more till it consummates the millennium.

In accordance with the views just propounded, we are not surprised to find the Hebrew people, notwithstanding the vague conventionalism of Oriental law, in the main staunch adherents of public order,

<sup>1</sup> Consult a concordance, under the word "Stranger."

and the duty of loyalty to "the powers that be," for the time being, "as ordained of God," is stoutly repeated in the New Testament. If any people might ever be excused from civil obedience it would certainly have been the early Christians, who derived so little help from the magistrates, and under so corrupt a government as that of Tiberius and Nero, to say nothing of the flagitious procurators of Palestine. Yet through all the fluctuations of power from Moses to Herod, the teaching of the prophets, equally with those of the apostles and of Christ himself, was faithful allegiance to the rulers, whether native or foreign. The miseries of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Roman captivities might have been averted had these warnings and counsels been duly heeded. The spirit of Mosaism, as well as that of the Gospel, was strongly in favor of peaceful submission to civil authority, however the stubborn and willful passions of the Jewish race, "stiff-necked" from the beginning, inclined them to rebellion and disorder. When the administration was not disturbed by this fanatical element, for example, under the Maccabæan sovereigns, the people exhibited a spectacle of decorous nationalism which went far toward realizing the prophets' vivid pictures of halcyon prosperity in post-exilian times as prefiguring the Messianic era.

The public spirit, for which the later Hebrews were noted, undoubtedly infused itself into Christian communities, and is represented by the immense advance that Christendom to-day manifests in this

respect beyond native Oriental countries. It did not originally take on the form of associated enterprise or of the division of labor, but the Jews, like the early Christians, were every-where distinguished by an activity and economy which led to proverbial thrift, and redeemed them from the prodigality that is eminently characteristic of their Mohammedan successors on the same soil. Diligence and saving, without miserly acquisitiveness, are part of the Mosaic as well as Gospel religion, and genuine godliness in both economies has the promise even of the present life in all its essential blessings.<sup>1</sup> In short, the Bible invariably enjoins and promotes national virtue, and offers a bounty for whatever is truly worthy or permanently advantageous in public no less than in private; nay, more so, for the retributions of nations are confined to this world, and as to their certainty the Scriptures are full of most emphatic lessons.

In all the relations of the family and society, after making allowance for the peculiarities already noted, Judaism and Christianity approach each other in a degree which can be appreciated only by a comparison with other Oriental faiths. As the home is the core of communal life, its purity and peace are the prime index of all social morality and felicity. A brief review of the bearings of the two religious systems on this matter will not be inappropriate or uninteresting.

Truthfulness to the marriage bond is enforced in the Mosaic statutes by many penalties peculiar to

<sup>1</sup> Psa. xxxvii, 11; Matt. v, 5.

that code, and although the obligation is more guarded on the female than on the male side, this is a feature common to antiquity and assignable to natural reasons. Christianity is confessedly a great improvement here, yet no one can even cursorily compare the Jewish household with the Gentile of the same day without perceiving the immense superiority of the former in the sacredness of wedlock. Patriarchal life was far less pure in this respect. The Bible in both its sections is full of rebukes of licentiousness, and, in both, the marriage tie is made a type of God's union with his people.

The tenderness and solicitude of the parental relation are also fostered by both economies in a most eminent degree, and the divine Fatherhood is a standing appeal to render this solemn duty a spontaneous pleasure. Born of her substance, and nourished from her breast, the babe is naturally nearer to the mother than to any other; and the Hebrew seers, more copiously than the Christian apostles, borrow this fond and intimate relation to express the deathless bond between the Church and its members. Nor is the physical care of offspring deemed sufficient: Moses, as well as the New Testament writers, especially enjoins, likewise, their moral and religious culture.

Conversely, children are earnestly and frequently exhorted to love, respect, and obey their parents; and an apostle calls attention to the fact that this, in the Decalogue, is "the first commandment with promise."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eph. vi, 2.

Similar harmony reigns between the Old and the New Testament in respect to the treatment of dependents. Severity in tasks is rebuked, and the prompt payment of wages is specially enjoined. The high motive of a common obligation toward God is appealed to in order to excite fidelity both in employer and *employé*.

All unfairness and double-dealing in commercial transactions is, in like manner, rebuked in the most explicit and emphatic terms, both in the Mosaic and the Christian maxims, and it is safe to say that no religion outside the Bible is at all so strenuous in point of honesty in bargains. Proof-texts to this effect occur in great variety and abundance in both Testaments. The proverbial Jewish trickery is the result of Christian oppression, and both grew up under a corrupt form of the respective faiths, namely, rabbinism and popery.

Lenience in the enforcement of pecuniary dues is taught by Moses and by Christ, and although the Jewish rule of refusing interest on loans is not specifically re-enacted in the gospels, yet the latter may be said to contain the first general bankrupt law on record.<sup>1</sup> Imprisonment for debt was scarcely a Mosaic practice, and Christianity has at length nearly abolished it.

Finally, under this social department, we allude to the frequent recommendations, in both Scriptures, of what may be called the amenities of life, such as courtesy, humanity, hospitality, and neighborly

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v, 42; Luke vi, 34, 35.

conduct. The Mosaic appeals in behalf of the needy, the helpless, and the lonely are of the most touching character; and these precepts are echoed with increased force in our Lord's parables and the apostles' letters. All these points are such obvious correspondences that we need not enlarge upon them.

The design of divine revelation is to improve the whole nature of man; hence we are entitled to look, under whatever economy, for the cultivation more or less of his mental as well as moral powers which are closely allied to each other. Accordingly, Judaism, although not distinctively elegant in any of its features, was nevertheless not opposed to good taste, and in many important lines decidedly showed and encouraged an appreciation of the beautiful and the true, as well as of the good and the noble in nature, in man and his works. Similarly, Christianity, although principally devoted to a higher purpose, yet incidentally is found to be a friend to every thing that exalts and develops the finer sentiments.

In those early days, when teaching was confined to a very narrow circle, both of instructors and pupils, and when facilities for that end were still more limited, the Mosaic institutes stand forth as the very first in point of time to devise and prescribe any form of public or private tuition in liberal or general information. The injunctions upon the head of the household to explain the meaning of the Passover to all its celebrants,<sup>1</sup> and upon parents to instruct their children in the law,<sup>2</sup> were a regular mode of

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xii, 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. vi, 7.

catechetical exercise, and set up the nucleus of the school in every home. We are not surprised, therefore, to find in later times regular educational establishments, not only of a professional character for the "sons of the prophets," but eventually for the people at large in connection with the synagogues scattered throughout the land. So likewise, in Alexandria and elsewhere, Christian schools very early rivaled the Jewish; and it is not too much to say that the modern system of public education is a legitimate outgrowth of the principles and tendencies inherent in the Bible on this head.

Again, Judaism was foremost in creating books and literary apparatus, and the apostles did but imitate Moses, the Psalmist, and the prophets in embodying the tenets and exemplification of faith in writing. Nothing has given a greater stimulus to intellectual activity than the Bible, and no work has elicited more study, criticism, and illustration.

Once more: art, both ornamental and useful, and science, both abstract and applied, have ever found in the genuine believer a firm and generous patron. The Mosaic law, it is true, has been construed as frowning upon painting, sculpture, and the fictile or plastic creations; but one of Moses's first efforts and the highest achievement of Solomon's genius were in architecture; and engraving, carving, casting, and embroidery were all called into requisition in the establishment of these national structures. Christianity, though needing no monumental shrine, has been prolific in rearing piles that will be things of beauty and

joy while the earth stands. It is a modern sophism that would array the Bible against true culture, and the effort is destined to be discarded like the uncouthness of Puritanism and the rigidity of Quakerism. God's creatures move in graceful forms, and the flowers are draped in brilliant hues, and so the Bible abounds in poetry as well as in logic, and the thoroughly devout heart in every age vibrates in unison with the æolian chords of nature, whether soft and sweet, or loud and stormy.

Thus, too, it appears that genuine politeness which only springs from real kindness, and true gentility of heart and deportment which is the heritage of sound piety, are eminent characteristics, in the main, of Bible saints, not excepting the Bedawi Tishbite and his congener, the Baptist, who occasionally show the fur side of their rough mantle; as witness the dignified challenge on Mount Carmel in the case of the former,<sup>1</sup> and the deferential reference in the case of the latter to his chief on every occasion.<sup>2</sup> Adam was no savage, nor was Abraham a barbarian, nor Moses a boor; the whole record of their lives exhibits a delicacy of sentiment and a refinement of manners which entitle them to the rank of true nobility, albeit devoid of the conventionalities of modern fashion. The graces of genuine piety include the humanities as well as divinity. So likewise the model Man of the New Testament was at the furthest possible remove from vulgarity and rudeness, as well as from haughtiness and harshness. Born of

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xviii, 21-24.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iii, 14; John i, 30; iii, 28-31.



royal blood, of the proudest race on earth, but reared in a humble domicile in an obscure village, and associating chiefly with the lower classes from his manger to his cross, he knew how to be equally at home with the publican and the Pharisee. Complete ease of demeanor, whether in the rustic or the urbane, is the product of native simplicity of spirit, and awkwardness is the result oftener of self-consciousness than of inexperience. Disinterestedness makes men calm, while philanthropy makes them cordial; and without these there can be no real good breeding. We have already indicated how the Bible every-where inculcates these virtues.

In the higher efforts of pure reason the problems chiefly presented in the Holy Scriptures, and sometimes grappled with a master hand, as in the books of Job and Ecclesiastes, are those relating to Divine Providence; yet incidentally several abstruse points are touched upon in a way to show that the Hebrews and early Christians, although not metaphysicians in the modern sense, were yet capable of acute logical distinction. It will be interesting to follow them in a few of the most important lines of philosophical thought.

The existence of God is assumed in the Bible, and only confirmed or illustrated by *a posteriori* considerations; but his attributes are abundantly set forth, and all that is knowable of him is told with the authority of direct acquaintance. So, likewise, as we have seen in an earlier part of this essay, angels, both good and bad, are frequently spoken of, and hints are

given as to their history and destiny, but no detailed account of their nature or acts is furnished. Man, occupying the third, and, so far as we are informed, sole remaining, rank of spiritual being, is treated altogether in a matter-of-fact way, with little attempt to classify his powers or sound their depth. Yet the completeness and clear discrimination of this triplet, which we may briefly define as being severally the pure infinite spirit, the pure finite spirit, and the embodied finite spirit, is in striking contrast with the confused notions and monstrous combinations of all heathen mythologies.

Of the Trinity we have spoken above, and of the triple constitution of man we purpose to speak presently; we linger a moment to particularize the medial order, or the angelic. Both Testaments speak of gradations both among the good and bad spirits, especially two, popularly termed angels and archangels; and of the latter we find Gabriel and Michael named as chief among the good, and Satan or Beelzebub or the Devil specified as a leader among the demons. The representations of these are in perfect accord throughout the Bible, the good spirits being cheerful executors of the divine messages and commissions, and the bad engaged in perpetual hostility to God and man. All this is so plain that we merely call attention to it.

We are not surprised to find the intricacy begin in analyzing the elements of man's nature, for he is proverbially a problem to himself, but we are not a little puzzled with the threefold division which we find

pervading both the Hebrew and the Greek Scriptures. This is expressed by three sets of words: first, רֹּחַ, (*rûäch*), πνεῦμα, *soul*; second, בָּשָׂר, (*basâr*), σῶμα, *body*; and third, עוֹלָם, (*néphesh*), ψυχή, *spirit*. The first of these series of terms, both in Hebrew and Greek, literally signifies *wind*, and clearly designates the pure, immaterial principle or immortal nature which man shares with God and angels; the second evidently denotes the corporeal or physical part; but the third is more difficult to define, since there is no *tertium quid*, or intermediate substance, between mind and matter recognized by sound philosophy. We think that by this third set of terms the principle of *life* simply, as a locomotive and conscious faculty, is intended; such as man has in common with brutes, for to them likewise the Hebrew and Greek words in question are freely applied. Nor is this distinction an over-nice or impracticable one, for beasts certainly have something—we commonly call it *instinct*—which serves them instead of a rational soul, and which is capable of sagacity, memory, will, and affection. This, we believe, perishes with their physical form, of which it is in fact but one of the modes of operation. We do not regard the argument drawn merely from the phenomena of mind as a satisfactory proof of immortality; immateriality itself does not positively prove it; only the direct assertion of Him who “brought life and immortality to light” irrefragably establishes it. The dog, the horse, the ant, and the bee exhibit mental traits, differing in various breeds, and even in

each individual, and in peculiar circumstances they often manifest something so nearly akin with reason that the difference is almost inappreciable; but they have no *soul*, they have a *spirit* only. They have no self-consciousness, they are not persons. They have no moral faculty, they are not immortal.

The fact is revealed by modern science that the vital principle has power to form chemical compounds, known as organic substances, which survive the organism that originated them, and yet are different from mere dead or mineral combinations; but we do not press this law into service here, because it reigns likewise in the vegetable kingdom, to which the biblical distinction under discussion does not extend. It will suffice to call attention to the fact that the nervous ganglia, even in the human body, often act independently of the brain in producing involuntary motion and other vital functions; nay, an electric current will galvanize the muscles of a fresh corpse into temporary action. This is a mysterious subject, but enough has been satisfactorily discovered to justify the introduction in physics of a peculiar force, termed vitality, distinct from both the mind and the body, but dependent upon their union, or at least organizing the latter. Precisely this we understand to be the tripartite constitution of man as stated in the Bible. It is the grand aim in common of Judaism and Christianity to consecrate wholly to the triune God this triune man, who represents not merely nor so much the Trinity as the trinal universe of matter, of mind, and of powers or qualities

emanating from the latter, but residing in the former, and constituting a *vinculum* between the two.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This popular and general position as to the trichotomy of the Bible is conceded in view of two facts: (a) the peculiar phraseology of a few passages, (especially 1 Thess. v, 23; Heb. iv, 12,) which cannot successfully be resolved into mere rhetorical amplification; and, (b) the careful distinction observed in the original (not accurately preserved in the English Version) between the three sets of Hebrew and Greek terms above noticed. It may be added that while רִּאֵשׁ, *rûach*, and πνεῦμα are never applied to brutes, (except in Eccles. iii, 19, 21, where the human and the animal spirit are together spoken of by a kind of *zeugma*; and in Gen. vi, 17; vii, 15, 22; Psa. civ, 29, in all of which passages beings in general, whether human or animal, are in like manner associated;) on the other hand, נֶפֶשׁ, *néphesh*, and ψυχή are never applied to angels or God, except in a comparatively few passages where no psychological distinction is intended, (Lev. xxvi, 11, 30; 1 Sam. ii, 35; Psa. vi, 16; Isa. i, 14; xlii, 1; Jer. v, 9; vi, 8; ix, 9, [8]; xii, 7; xiv, 19; xvi; xxxii, 41; li, 14; Ezek. xxii, 15; Amos vi, 8; Zech. xi, 8; Matt. xii, 18; Heb. x, 38;) in which places, by a well-known Hebraism, these terms are simply equivalent to *self*, and are anthropomorphically transferred to the Divine Person.

Nevertheless, as above intimated, this tripartite distinction in Scripture is not set forth as a real or essential one; there are not three natures or substances in the human constitution. The Bible every-where, like modern science, represents an actual *dichotomy*; the two sets of words last above noted only designate immaterial essence of sentient beings under its deeper *functions* as spiritual or animal respectively. This is quite clear from the constant interchange of these Hebrew and Greek words (רִּאֵשׁ with נֶפֶשׁ, and πνεῦμα with ψυχή) in speaking of men in their thoughts, emotions, and purposes; all mental acts and states being alike predicated of each, as any philological concordance will show at a glance. In all psychological relations, when speaking of man, they are practically synonymous, and as such they are freely substituted for the more general terms, "heart," "mind," etc. In like manner, בָּשָׂר, *basâr*, "flesh," with its strict equivalent σὰρξ, while specifically designating the physical constitutions of man, also in the Bible frequently includes his natural passions, and especially his corrupt affections.

Accepting, as the New Testament writers evidently did, the Mosaic cosmogony in its most obvious and literal sense, they were spared all the speculations and conflicts of ancient and modern theorists on this subject. We opine, however, that those antiquarians greatly err who maintain that the Hebrews and early Christians conceived of the earth as a flat disk, surrounded by an undefined ocean, beneath which the sun nightly sank to rise next morning at the opposite side; and of the sky as a crystal arch, over which the sun daily rolled, with stars above it, and sluice-doors through it for the descent of rain. We find little or no support for such views in the Scripture, except as poetical embellishments. On the contrary, the book of Job, which we place at the close of the patriarchal period, speaks of God as "hanging the earth upon nothing,"<sup>1</sup> and Solomon indirectly refers to the circulation of water by evaporation, condensation, clouds, showers, and rivers back again to the sea.<sup>2</sup> The Apostle Peter predicts the final destruction of the globe by fire,<sup>3</sup> a catastrophe which geology likewise renders probable by the theory of volcanoes, earthquakes, and central heat. These and similar notices scattered through the Bible are indeed insufficient to form a system of cosmical phenomena, but they indicate the consistent and cautious common sense of the sacred writers on these topics, which are still so profound, and were then so absurdly treated by some of the most respectable philosophers, to say nothing of the puerile and monstrous schemes of most Orientals.

<sup>1</sup> Job xxvi, 7.<sup>2</sup> Eccles. i, 7.<sup>3</sup> 2 Peter iii, 12.

Enough has been said respecting the philosophical principles exhibited in the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures alike, to indicate their direct and positive character in general, and to show that they had no affinity to nominalism or phenomenalism. It is obvious that their authors held to the *bona-fide* reality of matter, and did not regard it as a mere bundle or concretion of attributes or qualities, much less a phantom of the human perceptions. Fully crediting the senses, they looked through them to the outward objects apprehended as having an independent and essential existence. The frequent apparition of God and angels in bodily forms had, indeed, a tendency to reduce the popular notion even of the supernatural to the human plane. An intense recognition of the personality of spiritual beings certainly was the result. Yet there is no trace of materialism in the Bible. The unseen world was rather brought nearer to men's conception by the visions and miracles of the seers; but not in the superstitious manner of the heathen. Neither Judaism nor Christianity knows of goblins, sprites, or elves, either good or bad, although the vulgar may have to some extent intruded them from outside paganism. Witchcraft and all the black arts were proscribed, without indorsing their genuineness, and no fear of ghosts or specters appears to have haunted the homes of the true believers.

This is the more remarkable as in the Old Testament it contrasts with the fairies and imps, or at least local gods and goddesses, good, bad, or indifferent,

with which the Egyptians, Assyrians, and all the adjoining nations peopled every dale and hill and tree and noted spot, and in the New with the multiform naiads, nereids, fauns, river-gods, etc., of the Greeks and Romans; and it is in equal contrast with the extended angelology and demonology of the rabbins and the countless *jins* and *ghouls* of the Moslems, who now occupy the Bible lands. The pranks of "spiritualism" are altogether a modern invention. The necromancers of the Old Testament were ventriloquists, except perhaps the witch of Endor; and the demoniacs of the New were a special class of the insane, known only to that preternatural period. The Egyptian magic<sup>1</sup> was simply legerdemain, and the Ephesian soothsaying<sup>2</sup> mere fortune-telling. Divination of all sorts has always been pure guesswork or accidental choice on the part of the operator; if the ephod and the lot, the only forms commendably practiced in the Bible, were divinely directed, they were so by a particular providence in answer to prayer.

We now advance to the *moral* power of Judaism, which, in our view, compares favorably with that of Christianity. We deem that this resided or exhibited itself chiefly in three particulars, so far as its influence historically extended. The first of these, and the most cardinal feature of the whole system, was the unity of God. This gave a concentration to all its energies and sentiments impossible to polytheistic and idolatrous faiths. A worshiper

<sup>1</sup>Exod. vii, 11.

<sup>2</sup>Acts xix, 19.



distracted by a multitude of deities, often in conflict with each other, and always imperfect, could not have supreme or profound devotion to any of them. Even Mohammedanism, which contains this single element of truth, has manifested a theistic superiority over Paganism and Buddhism, which largely accounts for its ancient and modern success. Christianity fully adopts this doctrine of one absolute deity, and, as we have seen, the Trinity is by no means an abatement of it. The infinite and perfect cannot be measured, divided, or impaired; and hence the Divine Persons are a co-equal unit. The difficulty raised by Judaism, as by Unitarianism, that they are mutually exclusive, is fairly met by orthodox Christianity, which makes them mutually inclusive. No other religion, except perhaps that of a few sporadic individuals, such as Socrates and Black Hawk, has ever known the doctrine of monotheism; and the sublime character of these few persons has been almost solely due to it.

The next secret of power which we name in Judaism was the direct responsibility of each member of the theocratic community to Jehovah, and the consequent sense of personal fealty to him. The mediation of priest, and the intervention of sacrifice or ritual, did not interfere with this, but rather pointed and enhanced it by the awful pomp and solemn ceremonies involved. While miracles were performed in the very eyes of the people—and these were intermitted only for brief intervals—they could not forget this individual and intimate connection, extending to

every department and act of life. Not less energetically are Christians exhorted to dedicate their entire being momentarily to God, and to aspire to his purity. They have the example of Jesus, as the Jew had the Shechinah, to inspire and guide their endeavors.

As a result of these powerful impulses and commanding sanctions, the Jew has, in every age, when true to himself, shown a tenacity of adhesion to his faith which none but Christians have been able to imitate. From the days of the Maccabees to those of the Inquisition these two religions alone have stood the test of martyrdom. A pagan would esteem it the height of folly to die for his belief, but the true believer in the Bible accounts it his highest glory. In the history of both Churches (to use a modern phrase) thousands have eagerly coveted the privilege, and millions to-day would instantly prefer it to abjuration. Such devotion is destined to conquer the world.

The culmination, however, as we regard it, of both Judaism and Christianity, and the surest exponent of their inner identity, lies in the substantial sameness of the *spiritual* states and emotions which each is calculated to engender and develop. Of course these are clearer and deeper in the latter than in the former, but the germ and norm of all Christian experience lie enwrapped in Jewish tenets and sentiments, and it needs no microscopic ken to discover them.

The new birth, which lies at the threshold of the

Gospel, was no real novelty to the Old Testament saint. Our Lord, in his discourse with Nicodemus, justly expressed surprise that "a master of Israel" should not know it.<sup>1</sup> David in numberless passages plainly refers to it. Even so unapt a subject as King Saul was instantaneously "turned into another man."<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel speaks most pointedly of the change from "a heart of stone" to "a heart of flesh."<sup>3</sup> No one can read the impressive narrative of Jacob's wrestling with the angel without recognizing his genuine conversion. The mass of Jews may have failed to come up to this standard, as multitudes of Church members fall short of the true experience to-day; but it was not less the privilege and duty of the one than the other, although, we admit, not so distinctly pronounced. A sincere and persevering seeker has doubtless been ultimately secure of forgiving mercy and saving grace under either dispensation, though he have passed all his earthly days devoid of the joy of conscious pardon and inward renewal.

The filial relation of believers to God is not so distinctly brought out in the Old Testament as in the New, yet it is at times not obscurely intimated. The very term "Our Father," with which the Lord's Prayer begins, and which is echoed in the Abba of the new-born soul, is frequently found in this connection in the Hebrew poets;<sup>4</sup> and the relation itself is one of their favorite figures. It has of course more of a national than a personal

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 10.   <sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. x, 6, 9, 10.   <sup>3</sup> Ezek. xi, 19; xxxvi, 26.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Chron. xxix, 10; Isa. lxiii, 16; lxiv, 8.

significance there, but it was sufficiently familiar to the Jewish mind to be readily taken up on the accession of Christianity. The Evangelist illustrates the spiritual citizenship by the three modes of the civil : namely birth, proselytism, and adoption ;<sup>1</sup> and the evangelical and heavenly heritage is continually set forth in terms borrowed from the Hebraic usages.

The special influences of the Holy Spirit were likewise one of the privileges of the Jew, and these were only bestowed in a higher degree and with peculiar manifestations to all believers on the day of Pentecost. The Psalms are full of this experience, and extraordinary inspiration is repeatedly noted as coming upon the Hebrew leaders as well as prophets. That this divine afflatus was a permanent qualification of Old Testament worthies for their several public and private duties lies on the face of the narrative ; and this was the grand object of the baptism of the Spirit under the New Dispensation. That comparatively few enjoyed or availed themselves of this sacred birthright has been equally true in Christendom.

“Holiness unto the Lord” was pre-eminently the motto of Mosaism, and its complete attainment is the acknowledged aim of the Gospel economy. In the one it was taught by a series of object lessons, as to an infant class ; in the other, by direct precept, as to mature pupils. Many of the characters of the Old Testament compare favorably in point of sanctity

<sup>1</sup> John i, 13.

with those of the New. Job's perfect saintship is explicitly avouched,<sup>1</sup> and Melchizedek, Samuel, Daniel, and others are spotless examples of piety. Abraham was no more culpable than Barnabas, nor David than Peter. Jesus Christ is, of course, the only absolute model; but Moses approached that standard, so far as we are able to see, almost as nearly as Paul, and Jeremiah was not much behind John. The average degree of sanctification in heart and life among the Jews we are apt to underrate, from the frequent denunciations of the national sins in the prophets, which are rather directed against the rulers and public men than the mass of private citizens; but history and observation reveal, alas! fully equal corruption in nominally Christian lands and even in the so-called heads of the Church. In a period of the deepest general depravity a reserve of seven thousand are declared to have kept themselves free from stain;<sup>2</sup> and many a time the true followers of Jesus would seem to have numbered not many more on earth. Be that as it may, the professed rule is the same throughout the Bible, namely, entire conformity in character and conduct to the divine will and nature. This, more than any thing else, makes the Holy Scriptures a unit throughout in purport and doctrine.

Finally, in view of the future world, and preparation for it, the Old and the New Testaments are entirely in accord. We do not claim, indeed, that the general resurrection is plainly taught in the former, although one passage at least strongly points in

<sup>1</sup> Job i, 1, 8; ii, 3; xlii, 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings xix, 18.

this direction,<sup>1</sup> but as that doctrine was clearly developed not long after the Babylonian captivity, during which the Jews could not have borrowed it from their heathen neighbors, it must have been inculcated and formulated from the scattered hints and general analogies of the Hebrew Scriptures. But the immortality of the soul is plainly a Jewish tenet, and the famous passage of Job<sup>2</sup> is alone sufficient to substantiate it as a very early and wide-spread belief. Our Lord's short argument with the Sadducees<sup>3</sup> is conclusive on this point of Hebrew faith. The doctrine of rewards and punishments after death follows as a necessary corollary from this proposition, and the existence of heaven and hell for those purposes was well settled among the Jews long before the introduction of Christianity. That the Old Testament should say little in detail about these final awards was to be expected from its national, and, therefore, in some sort, mundane, character; but the Book of Ecclesiastes is of itself a sufficient witness to the profundity and earnestness with which Hebrew philosophers coped with the problems of futurity. If we lay aside a few chapters of the New Testament, especially the highly colored figures of the Book of Revelation, we shall find few particulars of the heavenly state positively taught except what descriptions of our Lord's resurrection body suggest. What little we do know from all these sources is in entire keeping with the slight intimations given to the earlier people of God by the translations of Enoch and

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii, 2.<sup>2</sup> Job xix, 26.<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxii, 31, 32.

Elijah and the mysterious death of Moses. We conclude, therefore, that Paradise regained,<sup>1</sup> in a spiritual sense certainly, and probably in a physical one likewise, was about the whole that the pious Jews understood by "Abraham's bosom,"<sup>2</sup> or the simple Christian by his Lord's celestial presence.<sup>3</sup> Beyond this pretty much all is speculation, after our most searching modern investigation and comparison.

We have thus scanned at some length the inner features of the leading economies, under divine revelation, in those respects which most deeply affect the thought and practice of their respective recipients; and we have said enough, we trust, to show their close harmony in spirit and influence, however widely their modes of exhibition may have varied. With this intent we have avoided as much as possible those points of view in which they traditionally or by common derivation coincide, and have extended our range of inquiry to those more recondite but basal principles in which the change of time and circumstances might be supposed, and have actually been claimed, to have estranged them from one another.

That there are differences, marked and important, of course, we do not deny, for else there could be no progress or improvement; but we insist that these differences are found more in the form than in the substance, and do not mar the symmetry of the great plan of which they are integral parts. Uniformity in type, with variety in manifestation, is God's method every-where, and we should expect spurious-

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiii, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xvi, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. i, 23.

ness where we cannot discern this evidence of divine art. The majestic condescension that reigns from the sublime announcements of the opening of Genesis (which no human eye could have beheld) to the gorgeous close of the Apocalypse, (which extends beyond the ken of time and sense,) is characteristic of the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New. In the former book men call it anthropomorphism; in the latter, accommodation. Both display, but in different ways, the divine Fatherhood, and all their details converge upon this as the focal point of theology. Divine revelation, while cumulative, is also climacteric; yet its several stages and phases have aimed, through the main lines of human interest, whether theoretical or practical, at the same worthy results, and have achieved them with an ever-increasing degree of success.



**FIFTH ESSAY.**

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**SUBSTANTIAL RECONCILEMENT OF CAL-  
VINISM AND ARMINIANISM.**

## ANALYSIS.

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- I. INTRODUCTORY SURVEY OF THE CHANGED HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF THE SUBJECT.
- II. GENERAL AGREEMENT IN THE GREAT FUNDAMENTALS OF ORTHODOXY.
- III. COINCIDENCES POINTED OUT BY PRESIDENT WARREN.
- IV. DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.
  - 1. Is not intended to interfere with human freedom.
  - 2. Nor to make God the author of sin.
  - 3. Alleged control by motives.
  - 4. Function of the will in conversion.
  - 5. The dispute on fore-ordination really a logomachy.
- V. ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION.
- VI. FINAL PERSEVERANCE.
- VII. CONCLUSION.

## SUBSTANTIAL RECONCILEMENT OF CALVINISM AND ARMINIANISM.

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THE serious attempt, or even the bare statement implied in the above title, will, doubtless, strike many as a piece of theological hardihood. The time was, within the recollection of many still living, when polemics were the order of the day on this field, and the early Methodists especially seemed to think themselves bound to take up and lustily wield the cudgels of controversy on the notable "five points" of Augustinian doctrine. Ingenuity was racked in order to set in the most odious light what Calvin himself confessed was a "horrible decree," and Lorenzo Dow's famous paradox,

"You can and you can't,  
You will and you wont,  
You shall and you sha'n't,  
You'll be damned if you don't,"

has been wrought out into a climax of absurdity, thus :

"A man gets religion when he don't want it ;  
When he gets it he don't know it ;  
While he has it he can't keep it ;  
If he ever says he has it he proves he hasn't got it ;  
After he gets it he can't lose it ;  
If he loses it, that shows he never had it."

Such caricatures, happily, have had their day. Men have won laurels in tracing the prevalence of Universalism, and even of Unitarianism, throughout New England to a revulsion against Calvinistic severity and Puritanic orthodoxy. These champions have doubtless deserved their honors; let us leave the wreaths crowned about their brows in the tombs where their ashes rest. Such blows have been no more than a fair retaliation for the frequent efforts on the other side to confound Wesleyanism with the free-thinking of Grotius and Whitby, and so to brand Arminianism with the name of semi-Pelagianism. Methodists of former times may be pardoned for trying to turn the tables upon their assailants, when they were elbowed out of the ecclesiastical field with suspicion and envy by the earlier occupants. The latter part of the present century has inaugurated a more liberal view of dogmatic as well as practical theology, and we now find, not only in this country but abroad, Calvinists and Arminians, of every caste and pale, cordially fraternizing in Church labor and evangelistic sentiment. There is still observable, indeed, an accent of the party speech and a shade of the denominational coloring in their intercourse, but this does not interrupt their mutual harmony and good understanding. As with different travelers through any region of country, the scenery which they describe is the same, but it is seen from a different point of view, or under changed circumstances of season, weather, or time of day. The substantial identity of all genuine Christian experience is guaranteed by

the fact of a common human nature, one true God, and the same Bible. Calvinists and Arminians, therefore, agreeing, as those to whom we refer do, in the essential point of a divine regeneration of the soul, cannot be far apart in the elements of the new life. The case is different with many classes of nominal Christians, who do not make this an important part of their faith, such as the liberalist and the ascetic, the Quaker and the ritualist, the schoolman and the Churchman, who regard Christianity exclusively in the light respectively of humanitarianism or monkery, of enthusiasm or liturgy, of dialectics or authority, and who may or may not conjoin with their creed the idea of a new spiritual principle as animating and organizing a consistent interior and exterior character. But when Presbyterians and Methodists, not to mention Congregationalists, Baptists, and others, to-day come together, as they constantly do, there is heard no jarring string; and, in fact, they find no effort requisite to unite in fundamental doctrine any more than to agree in essential polity. Neither Calvinism nor Arminianism is nowadays controverted from the pulpit, and the press fortunately is growing more reticent, or at least less violent, in this line than formerly. We do not deem it necessary to affirm that the Westminster Confession is losing its theoretical hold upon the minds of its professed adherents, but only that it is not so publicly and offensively commented upon as heretofore. Neither do we believe that the followers of Wesley are a whit less tenacious of their traditionary views than their fathers, but only

that they do not find it now so necessary to defend and expound these in a controversial form. There is a lull in the combat; rather, there is a tacit truce in the conflict. My object is, if possible, to lead to a real and lasting peace. Both parties have ceased hostilities, not simply because they are weary of the fight as painful and hopeless, but because it is now unnecessary and groundless. They have come to know one another better, and thus to love each other more. I propose in this essay to do what I can to show that this amity is not mere comity; that the reconciliation is based upon a true mutual comprehension, and not upon a blind ignoring of felt contradictions. The past issues are dead as well as buried. We have reached a point from which we can calmly review them. The purpose at least is a charitable one; let us hope that the effort may be successful.

It will be readily granted by all that on the great essentials of evangelical doctrine, such as the Trinity, the Atonement, and human destiny, Calvinists and Arminians (or, if any prefer so to call the latter, Wesleyans) are thoroughly agreed. Few Calvinists, we opine, believe in a limited atonement, and no Arminians, of whom we have any knowledge, deny the native moral depravity of the human race. On minor questions, such as the degree or nature of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the character of the final judgment, and the general resurrection, there may be some latitude of opinion in both these families of Christians, but it is chiefly speculative and confined to a few individuals. It is, of course, on the matters defined by

the Synod of Dort, and demurred to by the Dutch Remonstrants, that the long-time differences of tenets are still supposed to prevail. Before analyzing and discussing these in detail, I propose to call brief attention to certain particulars, intimately related to them, in which a remarkable assimilation has certainly taken place in this country within the present century.

In the article "Theology, New England," contained in Vol. X of M'Clintock and Strong's "Cyclopedia," President Warren, of Boston University, has conclusively shown that whatever may be true of the old-fashioned Calvinistic divines, the modifications introduced by the Edwardean system are in substantial accord with original Arminianism. He instances "the five points" of the early Remonstrant controversy, and further maintains that "the same metaphysical and ethical principles underlie the two systems," as well as "in positive theological, anthropological, and soteriological teachings," carrying out these affirmations into extended proof of relations. He excepts from this identification only "the absolute dependence of individual salvation upon individual divine election," also "*special* grace and human ability considered apart from the gracious aids of the Holy Spirit." That article was submitted, before printing, to eminent divines of the Calvinistic persuasion and received their assent. I need not here take space to recapitulate the conclusion of that article, the upshot of which, in short, is that, with perhaps the single exception of the doctrine of absolute and

unconditional election to eternal destiny, and the associated tenet of final perseverance in its extreme form, there is no considerable difference between Calvinism as represented by the most influential divines of modern New England, and the original position of genuine Arminians. I presume that the majority, if not the whole, of my readers will at once concede that in this country at large *predestination* is at present the great, if not the only, bone of contention between the two great bodies of theologians ranged under the separate banners of Calvin and Arminius. To this point, therefore, let us direct our first attention.

The universally accepted statement of this doctrine is the one formulated by the Westminster Confession of Faith, to the effect that *God ordains whatever comes to pass*. Whether he does this momentarily, or has done it by a fixed decree from all past eternity, is immaterial to the dispute. The only object that Arminians have in denying the proposition is in order to avoid the inference, which to them seems otherwise inevitable, that God in that case is the author of sin, inasmuch as sinful acts are certainly among the things that come to pass. But Calvinists expressly deny this inference, and repudiate the conclusion as stoutly as their opponents. Here we might be content, and here most are actually content, to drop the controversy, leaving the Calvinist to get out of this logical difficulty in his own way. Let us see how he does it, and we shall find that the two sides are really not very far apart after all. The Westminster Confession immediately qualifies the above dogma by



the proviso that it is not to be construed as interfering with human freedom. Hence the older Calvinists were wont to regard and represent the two doctrines of divine predestination and human free-agency as opposing cliffs of truth with an impassable gulf of mystery yawning between them. Later adventurers have discovered a by-path across this chasm. It is by the intervention of general laws which govern the transactions of the universe, including man's will itself. As Professor A. A. Hodge, of Princeton, indicates in the same *Cyclopedia*, (art., "Will, Calvinistic Doctrine of,") the Westminster Confession itself in the immediate context suggests that the divine determinations are in accordance with secondary causes, many of which are in their nature contingent. Moreover, as the same writer puts it, "the foreordination of the effects of free causes, such as the volitions of free agents, does not involve upon the part of God any purpose of putting forth efficiency to bring the foreordained volitions to pass, except that involved in bringing the free agent into existence, who, he foresaw, would freely execute the volition in question; and in giving him power, either natural or gracious, to execute it." In other words, as we Arminians may expound and resolve this position, the divine foreordination of human actions is simply a determination on God's part to create men with powers such as he foresaw would result in these acts, and then leave them to the free exercise of those powers. Now this is a matter of historico-theological fact, which no consistent theist can deny, and which Arminians

must admit. God certainly did foresee such results, he did create man capable of them, and he does allow them to take place. If that is all, there is nothing to dispute about. We may wonder why God should do so, but the ultimate reason is as inscrutable to the Arminian as it is to the Calvinist. Both suppose, both believe, that it was best for man in the end, and most for the glory of God on the whole, that it should thus be; and there both are forced at last to leave it. No mortal can fully understand it or authoritatively explain it. At least this has never yet been satisfactorily done.

I have endeavored, candidly and earnestly, to take this central problem of the Calvinian scheme in hand, and if I have correctly apprehended its true interpretation, I must honestly confess I see no serious objection to it. I would, of course, prefer to state the matter in different phraseology; but I am surely willing to allow every one to formulate it for himself. If I have mistaken the import of the Westminster Confession, or of its best exposition, I doubt if it would be a kindness to undeceive me. I love to think that my Calvinistic brethren and I are so nearly agreed, and I hope to remain forever under the fond delusion, if such it be. I can now imagine myself in their delightful company when I look upon the series of contingent events, and see in these the working out of the divine plan which embraced and provided for them all by an ordinance that insured their certainty, while it left their responsibility to voluntary agencies. It is amazing, as it is mortifying, to observe how easily misunderstandings arise,

even between good men, in the absence of friendly conference with an honest purpose of harmony, but it is comforting to discover how readily these misapprehensions may be dissipated by a careful and candid comparison of views. Most controversies are at bottom mere disputes about words, and exact definition often does entirely away with them. Arminians have been in the habit of interpreting the term "ordaineth" in the Westminster article as signifying the divine determination to effect the end contemplated, whereas it now appears to denote only the general purpose on God's part involved in the universal scheme of his creative and administrative economy. In like manner the phrase, "whatsoever cometh to pass," now seems to designate not so much the individual acts of responsible creatures, as the outcome of the whole providential plan in its varied features and relations. With regard to the natural realm, all parties are agreed that the world is governed by fixed laws, which are of direct divine ordinance and maintenance; and it is equally obvious that most events in social and political history, notwithstanding their involving the contingent conduct of free agents, are as truly subject to God's superintendency and controlling providence. It is only in the strictly moral sphere that the peculiar difficulty in question arises, because here the volitions upon which events turn become the ground of guilt and punishment. Yet in this province likewise God is surely supreme, and no one thinks of excluding his sovereignty by the intervention of any other agency, whether human or angelic.

In fact, the Bible expressly and in many places ascribes every thing, whether good or bad, to God. There is one passage, in particular, so explicit and comprehensive, as well as so specially apt, that it must be cited here. It occurs in the midst of that striking prediction of Cyrus by Isaiah, in which Jehovah says, in opposition to the Persian dualism, "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."<sup>1</sup> Here, at least, no figure of speech, no anthropopathy, no permissive theory, will avail. It is clearly asserted that the existence as well as the possibility of some sort of ill is due to the divine arrangement. Yet no one for a moment infers that God is to blame on this account, nor deems that this fact or doctrine in the least impugns his perfection of character or conduct. The true reconciling position is that the divine economy is such as to give free scope (within certain limits, of course) to bad as well as to good influences, and even to extend enabling power to the agents who bring these about.

For practical religious purposes this controversy hinges upon the doctrine of the human will. Calvinists and Arminians alike affirm its freedom, the latter asserting its direct self-determining power, and the former generally attributing its decisions to a balancing of motives. But those who hold the theory of the control of the will by motive at the same time maintain that it is the preference of the man himself for one motive above another which

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah xlv, 7.

gives that motive its preponderating influence with him ; and this is tantamount to saying that the will determines for itself. It is a mere dispute of terms and processes, not of fact or belief.

Most important is the function of the will in the matter of conversion, and here it is thought that Calvinism and Arminianism most radically and irreconcilably diverge, the one setting out with the idea of pure divine sovereignty, and the other insisting upon human synergism. Yet both agree, not only when they seek to promote revivals, but when they theologically discuss the matter, that while it is God who calls, man must also co-operate. It is clearly the yielding of the subject which renders a call effectual. Scripture emphatically corroborates this view: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."<sup>1</sup> The power to believe, to resolve, to do right, is of God ; but the exercise of that power is, of course, the man's own act. Does any Calvinist or Arminian doubt this? But the crucial point of the process of conversion still remains to be more definitely considered, and here a different solution is generally expected from the two sides of the theological arena. Let us take a case, and carefully trace the successive steps, in the hope that we may state them satisfactorily to both parties. A man is arrested in his sins by the Holy Spirit ; conviction of guilt fastens upon him which he is unable to shake off, and he at length determines to give his

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii, 12, 13.

all to God ; he then is enabled to look to Christ for pardon, and emerges into the clear divine life. Now, what is the precise influence under which he reaches the *resolution* that is evidently the crisis of this experience ? That of the Divine Spirit, we all respond, of course. But the question yet returns, What, still more exactly, is it which made him yield this time, when he had resisted a thousand times before ? Ask the man himself. Perhaps he can hardly tell you. He will probably say that he felt constrained to do so. Constrained by what ? you again inquire. He will doubtless answer : By a sense of sin and danger. Press him still further. How came that apprehension to be so vivid ? He can only respond, It became so while I thought of my conduct, and of the law of God. In short, if you ply him with continued questions, you will find that his convictions deepened because he allowed the Spirit of God to have freer access and action than usual. It is the same Bible story of divine drawing and human yielding. The grace was powerful, but not irresistible. The man was subdued, but it was by moral influence which could have had no power except by his consent and co-action. In short, conversion is a mutual process, the Spirit of God taking the lead, and the subject following. Few, if any, who have passed through its stages will dispute the correctness of the description. Of what use, then, is it to quarrel over names and phrases and relations ? It makes little or no difference, except as a matter of technical terminology, whether, with the Calvinist, we say that the man was already converted,

and, therefore, yielded ; or, with the Arminian, that he yielded, and was, therefore, converted. The facts remain the same, and they take place in the same order, whatever title you give them ; or, rather, they are more or less simultaneous, and their order is chiefly a matter of logic instead of history. The process is in reality a gradual one, the yielding being the result of grace, and so contributing to an increase of grace, and the conversion keeping pace with both until consummated. The same interaction is obviously characteristic of every subsequent stage of the divine life in the human soul. Had I space I might illustrate the above views, in a most striking manner, as I conceive, from the accounts of the experience of the Apostle Paul, especially that most remarkable change which he underwent on the plains of Damascus.

I have dwelt thus at considerable length upon the experimental part of religion as exhibiting the substantial identity of Calvinism and Arminianism when viewed in their interior reality, because of the essential importance of this feature ; for all theories are valuable chiefly when tested by practice. Indeed, in the controversy we are considering nearly every thing outside of the above comparisons is properly metaphysics rather than theology, and, like all abstract philosophy, is purely subjective and dialectic. For example, the nature of the divine foreknowledge, which Arminians hold to be a primitive, direct, absolute, and intuitive apprehension in the mind of God of all future events, whether certain or contingent, precisely as the divine memory contains a knowledge

of all past and present events, whether actual or possible; this faculty, so inconceivable and unapproachable by any human being, is one which, by a strict logical deduction, might be argued as a necessary consequence of the divine predetermination, since there is no being capable of frustrating God's purposes. But modern Calvinists, I believe, do not generally rest it upon this basis; and if they did, it would be no real prescience at all, but simply an inference from omnipotence. In the analysis of predestination given above, this foreknowledge is seen to be laid down as the basis and not the result of the divine "ordaining;" and this is in accordance with St. Paul's doctrine, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate," (Rom. viii, 29.) The core of the dispute is to ascertain precisely what it is that God foreknew concerning these predestinated ones. Arminians say that it is the fact that they would yield to divine grace. The elder Dr. Hodge, in his commentary on the passage, takes the term "foreknow" here in the sense of *selecting* or *determining upon*; which—besides being lexically untenable—is a sheer and palpable begging of the very question at issue, and an utter confusion with the term "predestinate" immediately predicated as a subsequent or resultant act. To say that God predestinated those whom he chose or fixed upon is mere tautology. It is a device of dialectics. The younger Dr. Hodge, in the article to which we have already referred, states the Calvinistic view more carefully and more logically thus: "God eternally saw in idea all possible free



agents under all possible conditions, and all the volitions which they would freely exercise under those conditions, if they were so created and conditioned. This knowledge precedes and conditions all fore-ordination." Apply this to the passage in question, and you have an interpretation which any Arminian might readily adopt. God foresaw that the elect would accept salvation. It is true Dr. A. Hodge goes on to distinguish this kind of foreknowledge as being that of simple intelligence of the *posse* from another more definite or determinative kind as to the *fore*. He adds: "God then sovereignly chose out of the possible the entire system of things which he desired to make actually future, and by this choice he made the futuration of all things certain." Yes, of course their *futuration* was thus made certain; but the divine *knowledge* of their certainty was not thereby in the least increased or changed. God, if he really possessed omniscient prescience at all, knew just as clearly and fully and eternally what events *would* come to pass, as he had known what might come to pass; nor does the proviso, "if he so pleased," affect the case in the least, for he certainly knew always what he would please to do. When, therefore, Dr. Hodge infers, as he immediately does, that "this fore-ordination precedes and conditions God's foreknowledge of things certainly future," he merely means, and can only mean, when translated into Arminian phrase, that the divine purpose *logically* converts the possible into the certain; which is precisely what I have stated above. Accordingly,

when he sums up by citing "an eminent Calvinistic authority," as putting the matter thus: "The existing system of things, or world-plan, was present in the divine mind from all eternity, and was therefore both foreknown and fore-ordained," we cannot but acquiesce in the statement as substantially true. For, do what we will, we cannot in our reasoning separate the divine foreknowledge from the divine choice as co-existent in fact, whatever be the order in which we may logically place them, or whatever may be the relation under which we may conceive of them. If God had not so pleased, nothing out of all the range of possibilities could ever become reality. All concur in this, and the further discussion of foreknowledge becomes a thing of mere metaphysics.

I pass from this abstract and comparatively unprofitable topic to consider a more practical theme of debate between Calvinists and Arminians, namely, whether Christians may become entirely sanctified in this life. Both parties admit that this were a very desirable possibility, and both agree that such a result is eminently worthy of the restorative scheme of the Gospel; neither of them doubts the competency of divine grace to effect it, nor imagines that heaven itself would be complete or even safe without its attainment. Now, under these circumstances, I submit that the matter is purely and simply a question of *fact*. It is not a doctrine at all in any proper sense, and hence neither party ought to dogmatize about it. If, as all orthodox believers allow, the Gospel has made full provision for their entire holi-

ness, and they are exhorted by every solemn consideration to seek and live it, then, instead of disputing about the practicability of the duty or privilege, we have nothing to do but to press on toward its attainment as rapidly and earnestly as possible. As a matter of fact, however, there is not much practical difference between Calvinists and Arminians on the subject, whatever variety of theory there may exist. Many a Calvinistic saint, such as the late venerable Dr. Hodge himself, doubtless has lived for years in the actual, though unconscious, possession of this experience, but all the while stoutly protesting against its possibility. Very few, even of Methodists, profess to have attained this state of grace; and it is more than doubted by the vast majority of Arminians whether any body ought to profess or can be sure that he possesses it. Mr. Wesley never professed it, at least not openly and expressly. I cannot find that St. Paul ever did. Jesus Christ certainly did, and the most judicious Christians of all denominations prefer to leave to him that superlative pre-eminence. Surely it would be better to let others praise us than to arrogate such a high and absolute state for ourselves. Many, I firmly believe, have actually lived for years on earth without committing any known or willful sin, and even without feeling any sinful temper. I believe there are many such saints now upon earth, and I think I have known and do still know some such. But this is my *opinion* only, based upon an imperfect knowledge of imperfect beings; and I cannot positively vouch for my estimate in the case,

much less require others to adopt it. I further believe, as a matter of confidence in God's promise and spirit, that every Christian, including myself, is entitled to the same experience, and that nothing but a weakness of faith and a lack of self-consecration prevents its realization; but when we come to define the particulars of such a life or state of grace, I would probably find myself making use of language, if sober and scriptural, to which no intelligent Calvinist would object. The difference is almost wholly in name, and not in the thing. Leaving a few technical phrases and pet expressions out, evangelical Christians of all denominations find no want of harmony whatever in the mutual narration and understanding of their experience, even of the deep things of God. The experiment is actually made every week, and with the most delightful success. Here, at all events, the genuine children of God are coming to see eye to eye in a complete and emphatic sense, and under this intimate conference their doctrinal, and even ecclesiastical, differences are daily growing to be of less and less account.

Finally, I offer a few words of reconciliation on a corollary of the mooted doctrine of predestination. Even Methodists are in the frequent habit of saying jocosely that they "believe in the final perseverance of the saints," and the pleasant temper with which the remark is received by promiscuous audiences shows that all parties have lost their former sensitiveness on the subject. Arminians maintain that the Christian in this life may fall from the highest

state of grace and finally perish, and they believe that history, observation, and the Bible furnish many actual instances of such apostasy. At the same time, however, they admit, or at least suspect, that in such cases of lapse there was some important, if not radical, defect in the Christian character and conduct which led to so fatal a result. Most or all believers, although truly such, have within them elements of sinfulness and remnants of sinful habits which, unless counteracted and expurgated by divine grace, are sufficient to work their ruin. Arminians therefore agree that divine power alone can restrain any one from thus destroying himself. Calvinists, on the other hand, maintain that no true child of God ever fully and finally falls away, but that divine grace once vouchsafed is competent and effectual in preserving him faithful to the end, whatever slips he may meanwhile make. At the same time, however, they prudently avoid pronouncing upon the actually regenerate state of any until the end is reached, and thus avoid both the disproof of their position and the countenance of presumption. They also insist as strenuously as Arminians upon the necessity of clinging to God by faith and prayer and self-watchfulness in order to maintain a Christian standing. Now, between these two aspects of Christian steadfastness, there is practically no very important difference. One may perhaps be regarded as a more cheerful view of the Christian's relations in some respects, since it encourages a present consciousness of a converted state; but it is more apt to degenerate into a dependence upon the state

of the emotions rather than upon a sense of duty. Nevertheless, in the end both amount to just about the same thing, since they equally hold fast and advocate such great scriptural maxims as these: "By faith ye are saved through grace, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;" "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" and "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Arminians no less than Calvinists rejoice in the security to the believer's hope afforded by such great proof-texts of perseverance as these: "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand;" "No creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus;" but they, as every common-sense reader must, understand these promises as referring to external persecution or temptation, and not as absolutely guaranteeing against the possibility of a voluntary relinquishment of Christ's cause.

I have thus endeavored, in an honest and pacific spirit, to compare the salient features of the two rival systems of theology, and I find either of them abundantly sufficient to build up the Christian in his holy faith, and to conduct him safely through this scene of probation to his heavenly home. The paths pursued by both are substantially parallel, and in these days of closer Christian fellowship between the two great communions represented they have grown more and more near together. Let us cherish the ardent expectation that when the two processions meet at the common gate-way into Paradise each will

look back with glad surprise to see how really contiguous they always were.

In this essay, of course, I do not assume or pretend to show that Calvinism and Arminianism are identical, but only that they may be so explained, and in their latest phases, as, I believe, they are actually so held as not to be incompatible in any sense that need interfere with entire cordiality of theological intercourse between their respective adherents. If the polemics of former days have accomplished no more than this, that they have "conquered a peace," and not a mere truce between the belligerents, they have not been in vain, and neither side need care to contend as to which finally remains master of the field of conflict. It is common rather than neutral ground, and both parties may fairly claim a victory, at least, over their carnal selves. "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." The present generation are not eager for the fray, and they prefer to "abide among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks." Thank God, these are the piping times of peace! Let us hope that Christians, at least, have beaten their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and that they will learn war no more. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

True catholicity is not merely a sentiment of toleration, nor a prudent forbearance out of fear of irritation, but a principle of association arising from a conviction of substantial unanimity. The motto of Augustine bids fair to be speedily realized: "In things essential, unity; in things indifferent, liberty; in all things, charity."

NOTE.—In conclusion of this essay I may state that its utterances commit no one but myself. Though issued from the denominational press, they do not speak representatively for the denomination, and there may be shades of dissent among many Arminians in regard to my positions. Probably many Calvinists would demur still more strongly to some of its conclusions. On these abstruse points all cannot see things exactly in the same light, and this is an argument for enlarged charity and forbearance. Perhaps all parties will agree to relegate to the domain of *philosophy* the questions still remaining in dispute. I am content so long as the theological arena is cleared.

At all events, whatever may have been the original meaning or the earlier expositions of the Westminster Confession, it is clear to candid and moderate readers that the later interpretations, as of Dr. A. A. Hodge and others of his school, bring it into substantial harmony with the Arminian position. The marked change in Calvinistic sentiment respecting the salvation of infants is in the same direction.

I am happy to be able to fortify my irenical position by the declaration of so noted a writer as Prof. Philip Schaff, who says, ("Harmony of the Reformed Confessions," an essay delivered before the General Presbyterian Council at Edinburgh, July 4, 1877, pp. 48, 49,) "Good Calvinists preach like Methodists, as if every thing depended on man; good Methodists pray like Calvinists, as if every thing depended on God. . . . The five knotty points of Calvinism have lost their point, and have been smoothed off by God's own working in the history of the Church."

On one mooted point, the *profession* of entire sanctification, I freely admit that this has been the practice of many eminent Methodists; but these have been comparatively rare exceptions, although all the followers of Wesley firmly maintain the reality of the experience.



SIXTH ESSAY.

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THE DIVINE COMPASSION IN THE ENDLESS PUNISH-  
MENT OF THE WICKED.



# ANALYSIS.

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## I. INTRODUCTION.

1. Conflict supposed to exist.
2. Divine benevolence.
  - a. Its prevalence.
  - b. Its conditions.
3. Human punishment.
  - a. The Bible full of it.
  - b. Endless punishment *equally explicit*.
  - c. Not God's preference.
  - d. A terrible necessity.
4. The same contrast elsewhere found.
  - a. In nature.
  - b. In mind.

## II. DIFFICULTIES ALLEVIATED.

1. Physical torment hereafter.
  - a. This unpleasant to contemplate.
  - b. But not in itself improbable.
  - c. Yet not important to the question.
2. Mental anguish.
  - a. Subjective in its nature.
  - b. But necessary under the circumstances.
    - i. Withdrawal of accustomed sources of enjoyment.
    - ii. No new avenues of pleasure.
    - iii. Unconsciousness not supposable, and annihilation no fit relief.
    - iv. Evil passion must continue.
    - v. Power of memory, etc.
  - c. Proportioned to demerit.
    - i. Such the Scripture view.
    - ii. No arbitrary gradation just or possible.
    - iii. Surprises probable in destiny.
    - iv. Advance in degree and power.
    - v. Charity in human judgment.
    - vi. Physical and moral penalties distinguished.

3. Not so much a positive infliction as a leaving to themselves.
  - a. Dependence for enjoyment upon others.
  - b. Real happiness flows from conformity to God.
  - c. A holy heaven would be the worst hell for the wicked.
  - d. A voluntary training during probation necessary.
  - e. Compulsory preparation the highest absurdity.

### III. CONCLUSION.

1. Solemn responsibility of the present state.
2. No regrets in heaven over the lost.
  - a. Change of views and relations.
  - b. Every effort possible made in their behalf.
  - c. Their own acquiescence both by choice and as right.
  - d. The good of the universe conserved.
3. Sovereign love eternally vindicated.
  - a. Approved by the good.
  - b. Admitted by the bad.
  - c. The divine compassion unavailing to avert the doom.

THE DIVINE COMPASSION  
IN THE  
ENDLESS PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

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THESE two thoughts are generally regarded as direct opposites. In former ages little was said about their incongruity; both were silently held to be true, and human efforts at their reconciliation were looked upon as futile, gratuitous, presumptuous. Modern times, however, have not been content to leave this, nor indeed any other debatable point, undisputed, and thus a new sect, the Universalists, have arisen, who utterly deny the final and everlasting misery of any human being as incompatible with God's love. Moreover many evangelical and orthodox Christians of nearly every communion are coming to look with suspicion, or at least misgiving, upon the doctrine of endless punishment as being abhorrent to the natural sympathies of mankind, and are disposed to pass it over with neglect or to invent some theological escape from it. Rather than to adopt so violent and inconsistent a conclusion, it is incumbent upon us briefly to review the arguments in support of the two propositions, which are supposed

to be irreconcilable. This will likewise serve to prepare the way for the solution of the problem, or at least show that the difficulty is by no means so great as is often imagined and represented.

Love is universally admitted to be a prominent, nay, even a ruling, trait in the divine character. The Bible, especially in the New Testament, explicitly affirms this in the most positive and reiterated manner,<sup>1</sup> and it is grateful to human nature to accept the doctrine in the broadest and most absolute sense. Nevertheless we must not ignore the passages, still more numerous and particular, which qualify and define this expression, and show that it is not a blind impulse, nor a weak sentiment, but an intelligent principle and a deliberate, wide-viewed plan of action on the part of the Creator and Governor of the universe. He is constantly represented as a Father, but it is under those wise and guardian relations which commend a parent to the thoughtful affection of an obedient child, and not in the fond indulgence of an overweening dotage which sacrifices every prudent consideration to its own or the child's gratification. God is the head of a large family, and must look not only to the best good of each member, but to that of the whole collectively, and this without the shadow of partiality. Hence the Bible is full of representations of his restraining and modifying the parental tenderness, both in word and deed, so as to accomplish a higher good, regardless of the pangs (so to speak) inflicted upon himself and his human off-

<sup>1</sup> John iii, 16, 17; 1 John iv, 7-10, 16.

spring. "Spare the rod and spoil the child," is a favorite axiom of revelation, and is especially applied to the moral discipline of the race; indeed, it is made the peculiar privilege of sonship and mark of affection.<sup>1</sup> True, this holds good chiefly of the probationary sphere, but it discloses a deep-seated element in the Divine nature, which we cannot suppose is ever violated.

Accordingly Scripture abounds, both in its historical and its preceptive parts, with statements and examples of the divine government in which penal inflictions are awfully prominent. Some of these, indeed, have been the stumbling-block of skeptics from early times. But there they stand recorded without a word of apology or palliation: no ingenuity has succeeded in eliminating them; and if we accept the Book as in any degree truthful, these are stubborn facts. Precisely so is it with regard to the declarations in Holy Writ respecting endless perdition: we may cavil at them, we may dispute their reasonableness, we may seek to soften or explain away their meaning; but it is all in vain. It is noteworthy, too, that the most positive and uncompromising of these passages are found in the New Testament and come from the lips of the Lord Jesus himself. We need not stop to detail or expound them; they are familiar to every student, and we do not care to meet the frivolous exegesis which tries to elude their force. No unbiased mind can possibly understand them as teaching less than the everlasting misery of the finally

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xiii, 24; Heb. xii, 5-10.

penitent. Language, both literal and figurative, is lavished upon the portrayal of this subject in the most varied forms, and in the Apocalypse whole visions are devoted to rendering the future scene as graphic and impressive as possible. Besides, we have repeated affirmations and illustrations of the divine justice, under all the dispensations, so emphatic as to leave no doubt with the most casual reader that this, no less than love, is a cardinal feature of God's administration. The crowning proof of this is found and cited in the fact that he gave up his own Son as a ransom rather than abate the slightest tittle of the penalty due to transgressors. At the same time, as this last exhibition of love pre-eminently suggests, God is never represented as taking any pleasure in the final punishment of the wicked, but always as deeply commiserating the sufferings of his human creatures. These are constantly set forth as a dire necessity created by their own folly in sinning, and especially by their refusal to accept the proffered terms and means of deliverance. Viewed in this light there is no real conflict whatever between the two attributes of the Divine nature; and if mercy and righteousness have not in every individual case actually embraced each other, the fault is certainly not on God's part, but must be sought in the incorrigible perversity of man himself. That every free human will does really possess this fearful power of rejecting salvation is simply a matter of fact attested by universal consciousness and observation. Why man was thus constituted and circumstanced is, of course, an unsolved



problem ; but it is only part of that wider question, the existence of evil, to the comprehension and answer of which finite intelligence is now, and perhaps forever must remain, incompetent. We might peremptorily dismiss this whole discussion by the simple remark, that final and endless misery is in principle no more inconsistent with divine benevolence than present and temporary suffering, which latter is a palpable fact of every-day occurrence. But we think that there are even greater and plainer reasons for the perpetuity of unhappiness than for its bare possibility and first occurrence, and that there are especially strong justifications for its judicial infliction, which deserve the thoughtful attention of every earthly probationer.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion," has so fully and conclusively shown the prevalence of law as well as of love in the material world, that we need here only refer to his masterly argument in illustration of the harmony above pointed out. There still remains, however, the strong confirmation derived from the psychological character of the human constitution, which is especially in point here, as the mind is itself the seat of the very misery in question ; its laws, therefore, must be determinative of the whole controversy. To this field, then, let us betake ourselves in the hope of

<sup>1</sup> We have every-where in this discussion assumed that the present life is a probation, not only as a doctrine of the Bible, but because of the impossibility of equalizing human destiny on any other theory. God's government is obviously defective without it.

clearing up the difficulties; and we do so the more confidently because it lies directly under the purview of our own consciousness and observation. No man ought to refuse conclusions which result from his own knowledge of himself. Those who have any sensibility of conscience feel that an unconditional pardon, while the offender remains incorrigible, would be an outrage upon all propriety: the very culprit himself would despise the governmental imbecility that could thus condone his crime. And surely an obliteration of the moral sense, if in any case it be supposable, can be no just apology for vice, but rather an enhancement of its heinousness; so that those who do not feel the turpitude of their misdeeds, and are willing to go scot-free without reformation, would not only be a mortal pest in the universe, but moral monsters in themselves. So long, therefore, as our ethical notions remain sound, we cannot conceive of any other just or safe disposal of the finally impenitent than their endless punishment. Nevertheless it must be conceded that the conclusion in this bald form is attended with certain difficulties—the result, indeed, of tenderness for the lost and of self-estimation, yet still sufficiently extensive and distinct to constitute a formidable objection in many minds against the whole doctrine. We apprehend that these may be dissipated by a more careful examination of the nature and grounds of the final woe.

A large part of the abhorrence experienced by sensitive minds against the view in question has arisen from the injudicious manner in which it

has often been presented by its advocates, especially the strongly physical character of the torments delineated, such as hell-fire, brimstone, etc. Horrid pictures of the infernal regions have been drawn, not only by poets, as Milton and Dante, but by theologians and preachers; and against these delicacy has so violently recoiled as to bring the whole subject into disrepute and disgust. Suffering in any form is not pleasant for a human heart to contemplate, and these representations have been made unnecessarily repulsive. Most of the Scripture language on these points is undoubtedly figurative, and great injury has been done by interpreting them too literally. There is, indeed, no improbability in the supposition that there will be physical discomfort for the bad in the other world, since they, too, are to have a material body, however sublimated, and that its capacities will be much more exquisite than in this life; for surely there is neither reason nor equity in believing that the bloated drunkard or the infected debauchee will be raised free from the disease which his infamous vice has struck deep into his very person. But these are extreme cases, and many sins do not thus leave their marks upon the body. Nor is it important to dwell upon such comparatively insignificant particulars, concerning which we are for the present largely in the dark. There are other considerations of far weightier moment and more plainly revealed both in Scripture and in man's constitution.<sup>1</sup> We could

Civilized codes assign felons to solitary cells, with manacles and the halter for murderers; but they do not add wanton torture to any.

afford to eliminate all bodily suffering from the future state, and yet elements of torture would be left sufficient for an eternity of pain. "The *mind* is the man," and in its nature are wrapped up the capabilities of the most profound, intense, and enduring misery. Indeed, all unhappiness is essentially mental; the bodily sensations and physical surroundings are but accessory to the subjective states, and the soul continually asserts its superiority over them, if not its independence of them. The true life of a man, even here, does not consist of his external possessions or facilities, but of his internal acquirements and developments. These are his inalienable property, they are part of himself, and no variation of circumstances can rob him of them. Let us see, then, what change death will really make with the wicked, and thus we may arrive directly and certainly at an estimate of their resources and prospects in the other world.

It is evident that many of the present facilities for pleasure will be absent in the future state. Whether the resurrection body will possess any of the physical appetites is doubtful; but certainly the means of their gratification will be greatly modified if not wholly removed. The property amassed here cannot follow us thither, and with it must surely fail the larger part of the enjoyment experienced by worldly minds. The social situation, too, will be very different, and although the boon companions of the wicked may still surround them, these will but add to their discomfort by being themselves likewise in a sorry plight. How any rational being who has made gold

his god and this world his idol can expect to be happy in the life where these are necessarily absent is passing strange. There will be no opportunity for the frivolous amusements in which the irreligious now spend their time, and by which they dissipate their better thoughts. The vain show of this scene will forever have passed away, and dreary indeed must be the aspect and prospect for those who have not cultivated a taste for higher and abiding things. Horse-races, theaters, gambling, drinking, smoking, dancing-parties, clubs, excursions, newspapers, politics, and the thousand forms of dissipation or diversion which here constitute the grand attraction of the masses, will there be out of the question, and woe to those who are not prepared to substitute something more substantial in their place! We all know how uneasy and, at length, positively unhappy an ordinary business man becomes when he has retired with a competency, but has not learned to occupy his leisure with social, literary, or philanthropic activity. How much more when all these avenues of recreation and gratification shall be closed peremptorily and finally! He will then have no more houses and lands to improve, no more stocks, bonds, and cash to invest and collect, no more relatives to look after, no more travels, no more any thing to concern him; the future will be one monotonous blank, and *ennui*, if nothing worse, will corrode his beggared soul, until bare existence will become an intolerable burden. So, of the frivolous woman devoted to fashion, dress, balls, gossip, parade, novels, cards, and the endless ways of

wasting time and money on earth: what can be her hope of comfort in the life where all these will be brushed aside by the stern realities of naked selfhood? Let such hold before them the honest mirror of their inner consciousness, and they will be affrighted at the certainty of misery in store for them beyond the grave.

For there will be no opportunities for inaugurating or carrying out any fresh employments to take the place of these discarded frivolities. In the nature of the case, and by all the terms of probation ended, the fixedness of the final state will stereotype every impression and render inveterate every habit acquired on earth. No new lines of education, no reformed career, no improved selection of pursuit, can there be adopted. If final adjudication means any thing, and if the Bible statements on the subject are of any force, all human beings will hereafter be shut up to the same course of action as they have here instituted, and, failing these, there can be no hope or possibility of reparation. Indeed, what we already know makes this certain and inevitable. Death can produce no essential change in the mental constitution or furniture, and can add nothing to our facilities or opportunities. Rather, it must immensely curtail them, and if fresh ones are to be restored by the new body at the resurrection they will, indeed, be suited to the ethereal and spiritual sphere, but only such as the unchanged soul, with all its old characteristics and aptitudes, will concrete about itself. Alas for those who have failed to educate and enrobe their immor-

tal spirits in this antechamber of existence for the endless associations and occupations of that final residence! It is for this very purpose that the present stage of being is provided, and to this end are its many fluctuations and contingencies; but with its close all new departures, all amelioration, all rehabilitations, so far at least as the mind is concerned, will have ceased, and the golden opportunities of fitting for the perpetual verities will have passed away. He who has not learned to take pleasure in the other world in advance cannot there acquire the first lessons in that sublime knowledge.

Nor is any one at liberty to take refuge from himself in the supposition of an oblivion hereafter from the concerns and interests of this life. Mere forgetfulness, were it possible, is not positive happiness. Unless something better be supplied, what would we gain by losing the recollection of past enjoyments, even though the knowledge that they are irrecoverably gone should cause a sigh? Still less would absolute unconsciousness be an improvement, were it supposable. But there is no ground in revelation or psychology for any such hypothesis; all that we know of the mind assures us that it must forever flow on in the channel which confirmed habit has marked out; and it is not in the power of the will itself directly to change its course or to affect its emotions. We cannot command even ourselves at pleasure, but must make use of the appliances which God has appointed for the purpose. No nightmare dream or profane fable of annihilation is to be real-

ized, nor would it be a welcome alternative to a sane mind. Medical experts are now generally agreed that suicide is *prima facie* evidence of at least temporary *dementia*, and the hope or the wish of final and utter extinction is still more insane. Such a thought is, indeed, the climax of despair. The wicked shall not thus elude divine justice and the consequences of their own misdeeds. No Lethæan waters can obliterate the traces of the past upon the imperishable tablets of the soul. On the contrary, the lines will flame out brighter with the judgment conflagration, and will blaze with dazzling distinctness in the electric luster of the everlasting world. God's doomsday-book will tell the story to a listening universe, and shame will brand it indelibly upon the cheek and heart of the guilty.

Above all, we feel assured that the worst passions of the unregenerate heart, being unchecked by the moral restraints of providence, the Holy Spirit, and human society, will run riot in the abodes of the lost, until pandemonium shall be realized in all their realms. Imagine what would be the state of things in any community where all fear of death should be removed, all hope of reward taken away, all escape from unpleasant neighbors impossible; where no improvements could be effected in individuals or the body at large, but where the vilest would be free to corrupt each other and themselves *ad libitum*, and where the common tendency of human nature to degeneracy should be left to work its worst without an antidote. What motive could be conceived for doing



good to one's self or to any other? The deteriorations of such a state are too frightful to dwell upon. They certainly leave no room for retreat or recovery.

Let none say that this is an imaginary picture never to be realized. Bear in mind that we have not painted it out of the Scriptures merely; we have sketched it from the reality of human life here, and have only added the shading of eternity. It is but a photograph of the carnal heart projected upon the screen of the future world. We have only to search the archives of memory, in which every impression is recorded with a tenacity that disease occasionally reveals with startling fidelity and minuteness, like the tin-foil of the phonograph; we have but to note the anguish of chagrin over failure in earthly plans, the remorse experienced here for duty violated, the despair of the present life, in order to appreciate what horrors the soul can conjure up out of its own depths in broad daylight, and amid the serenities of home and health. What may not these terrific powers do when they shall storm uncurbed over the ocean of irretrievable shipwreck, with the enhanced susceptibilities of the unfettered state, the superadded force of the resurrection frame, and the grim abettal of demons and lost fellows? No person knows his own capacity for suffering until some acute malady or perhaps nervous complaint turns one screw of the rack after another; but the most consummate specimen of mortal misery is, perhaps, the delirious wretch whom his own ungoverned appetite for intoxicating

drink has driven to frenzy with apparitions created by his own spectral fancy. Hell is but another name for such torments become chronic.

It may be presumed, from our knowledge of God's equity, that eternal pain will be strictly measured according to the deserts of each subject. Of this surely no one can complain. Such is the invariable teaching of Holy Scripture, and some passages are remarkably definite on the subject.<sup>1</sup> It is a great consolation, therefore, amid the perplexities of this theme, to know that the omniscient Judge of all the earth will finally do exactly right. Absolute and full justice will be meted out in the end to all. No arbitrary or Procrustean rule is to be supposed; no narrow line of technical or conventional division, such as Church membership, external morality, etc., will be adopted or observed in the last day; the sheep and the goats will be separated by unerring wisdom, but on a just estimate of their real character and doings; no other course would be practicable in the case, for nothing there will be concealed or misunderstood. Doubtless many unexpected decisions will then be rendered; some who have stood fair with their fellows on earth will be unmasked as hypocrites and selfish knaves; others, who have lived and died under a cloud of suspicion, will be vindicated as pure and maligned. We cannot think that the natural amiable qualities and social amenities and domestic virtues will be overlooked, nor that pietistic churlishness and ascetic self-esteem will be rated high in that grand and

<sup>1</sup> Ezek. xviii; Luke xii, 47, 48; Rev. xxii, 11, 12.

righteous assize. Small generousities often disclose a great principle, and petty meannesses betray a deep unworthiness. As in the days of our Lord some of the most despised classes preceded the self-righteous in the kingdom of God, so in the last day comparative heathen will put to the blush many professed disciples.<sup>1</sup>

We often err in our estimate of the piety of others, but there will be no mistake in that day. The great test will undoubtedly be, not how many or how large have been the good deeds wrought, but whether they have been sincerely intended for the glory of God and the welfare of man." Observe, both these last

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii, 41; Luke x, 12-14; xi, 30, 31.

<sup>2</sup> We have not forgotten the necessity of regeneration as the cardinal requisite for admission into the kingdom of heaven, (John iii, 3; Gal. vi, 15,) nor of faith as the condition of justification; nor are we at all disposed to limit the importance of these to the present life. But it should be noted that they are silently implied in the terms above submitted; and since both pardon and renewal, as well as sanctification, (which is the final stage of preparation for heaven,) are altogether the act of God himself, (performed, indeed, on certain conditions in the human subject,) they cannot of themselves be properly made the basis of the final judgment. We believe that they will be (or, if any prefer, *are*) freely bestowed (whether at death or before, whether consciously or otherwise, is of little moment in this discussion) upon all who during probation have exercised the faith (substantially but necessarily distinctly) upon which these blessings are suspended; and that the evidence of this faith (to others at least) is to be found in the test above stated. This ruling, of course, includes a large number of persons usually reckoned dubious, but it is certainly a necessary proviso, for otherwise the whole heathen world would be absolutely shut out, and even many worthy and sincere Church members who have died before (apparently) attaining these graces. Indeed the saints, however well acknowledged and mature, will not themselves be tried at last (nor even here) by any other standard than

aims will be duly considered, and in the order named, for such is the spirit and obvious purport of our Lord's great sentences in the matter.<sup>1</sup> This is a rule which must commend itself to every one's judgment, and the awards founded upon it will meet universal approval. The condemned themselves will have naught to allege against it, while the acquitted will applaud its clemency. The divergence between the two classes may in some instances be comparatively slight, but it involves a principle of fundamental distinction and importance; and, as the cycles of eternity roll on, it will become ever more and more apparent. For, while the good will advance in holiness, the bad will continue to descend in the moral scale, and thus the rectitude of the final award will stand increasingly justified. We wish to emphasize this part of our reasoning, because upon it, as we conceive, depends very greatly the vindication of the whole scheme in the popular estimation. It is the sharp and sudden contrast often made in representations of the fate of

the above, because *actions*, and not professions, nor even feelings, are the only visible proofs of piety. Matt. vi, 16, 20. But God, who—besides the person himself—alone knows the motives prompting to those acts, and giving them all their moral value, will in the final day, if not before, interpret and credit them accordingly. In this line of argument, however, we are not advocating *unconditional* salvation for any except infants and other irresponsible human beings. Their case has its own grave difficulties, but they have no pertinence here. We are only treating of the endless punishment of the wicked, those positively and clearly such. Negative cases, if such there be, we may, therefore, fairly lay out of the account. God will know how to settle them.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii, 36-40; xxv, 31-46; comp. Rom. xiii, 8-10; James i, 25-27; ii, 8-18; 1 John iv, 20, 21.

the pious and the irreligious that offends a sense of propriety, and even of equity, in many minds, who do not consider that the identical difference, both in character and enjoyment, actually exists already upon earth between the two classes—that is, those who really, and not in name only, are such respectively. There is to be, as we apprehend the matter, no violent, abrupt, and instant change whatever in these moral respects, but each party will remain exactly what they previously were in point of internal experience, with only such modification of feeling as external circumstances may induce, and without any power of assimilation to altered relations. Some persons, we opine, who have flattered themselves with a vain hope that they were Christ's, while they had none of his spirit, will then wake up to the discovery of their mistake, when it is too late to correct it; others, who were content to aspire only to "an humble seat in heaven," will find theirs quite low enough; but those whose aims were higher, and whose efforts were corresponding, will be as stars of the first magnitude in the celestial firmament. On the other hand, we incline to believe that numbers who have professed and perhaps thought little about their virtues or sanctity on earth, but have honestly and modestly gone about their duties in the path of providence, will find a verdict of far higher praise than they expected in that day; while some, perhaps, who, like Saul of Tarsus, ignorantly opposed the truth, will have mercy extended which they never dreamed they needed; and only those who willfully shut their eyes to the

light, and recklessly plunged into sins of which they had been warned, will meet the full penalty of abused privilege and deliberate wrong-doing. Let each man judge himself severely and his neighbor leniently, remembering the great Judge's admonitions in this regard,<sup>1</sup> and leaving to him the decisive award.

Another distinction of great importance in this connection must not be overlooked, as it is in entire accord with the discriminations and conclusions already reached in this essay. The violation of physical law is visited with physical penalties, and that of moral law with moral ones. This equitable division is strictly observed on earth, and it is reasonable to suppose that it will be maintained hereafter. There are cases, indeed, in which a physical transgression becomes also a moral offense, by reason of a revealed as well as a natural prohibition; but, as a general rule, the two departments are administered somewhat independently. On this principle we can readily see how a person who carefully follows the material, social, and domestic regulations of life will preserve his health, his property, and his respectability, without necessarily acquiring any religious position; just as he may abide by the statutes of his country without regarding the prescriptions of the Bible as such. In like manner we cannot suppose that one who has lived intelligently, discreetly, temperately, justly, and decently here will suffer in the world to come the disadvantages or woes of the ignorant, the thriftless, the dissolute, or the niggardly;

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii, 1-5; Mark xi, 25, 26; comp. Rom. xiv, 4.

yet certainly, if he have not purposely obeyed the dictates of conscience and the commands of heaven, he cannot expect any reward from those sources; and if he have directly set them at defiance, he will surely experience their retributions. That these last do not take place in full proportion on earth is simply a fact of observation from the most remote antiquity; then all the more must they occur beyond. For these moral demands are universal, perpetual, and inexorable; they are graduated solely according to light and opportunity, and they will no more relax their hold upon their subject than natural or civil law will theirs. Indeed, they are still more indelibly impressed upon and incorporated in the human constitution, so that not even the metamorphoses of death and the resurrection can annul or impair them; for they are lasting as the mind and eternal as God himself. This, as it seems to us, relieves the divine administration of the last remaining shadow of injustice or malignity.

From all the foregoing considerations it will appear that the everlasting misery of the wicked results rather from the legitimate and necessary operation of the laws of their own being than from any special or vindictive infliction of divine power. They are simply left to themselves, or, as Scripture frequently expresses it, they are allowed to reap the harvest which their own hands have sown, and to eat of the fruit which they have themselves planted. The blessings which they have abused are forfeited, the mercy which they have slighted is withdrawn, and the

opportunities which they have failed to improve never more return. They are shut up to their own resources, and confined to associations that they have already selected and cultivated. How meager and poor and unsatisfactory these will prove the slightest acquaintance with human nature will suffice to predict. Every body knows that we are largely dependent for enjoyment upon others, and none more so than the irreligious, who are almost exclusively driven to extraneous stimulants to keep their flagging spirits, while the healthful food of contemplating God's works and word is systematically secluded from their starving souls. How forlorn must be their condition when their best friends leave them—the good for better society, and the bad in the vain effort to help themselves! To be alone with their thoughts here is purgatory; what will it be then? Real happiness, as those who have found it unanimously confess, and as the nature of the case compels, is to be found only in conformity with the divine will and nature; but this in the case of the lost is forever less and less attainable; and misery is in proportion to the lack of it. Could the wicked be transported to heaven as they are, it would be the last place to give them comfort: its holy employments are utterly distasteful to them; they are wholly incapable of happiness from the only source then remaining or possible. God himself, solemnly be it spoken, is unable to give them peace: he has exhausted his efforts upon them, and they are finally abandoned in despair. Such a result evidently can only be the issue of a course of



conduct on their part voluntarily and persistently pursued during a probation like that which mortals now enjoy, the design and tendency of which undoubtedly is to develop either piety or irreligion to a mature and, therefore, stable condition. None, as we believe, who have attained responsibility, are removed from this stage of being until this process is sufficiently complete, in the eye of the All-seeing, to warrant its perpetuity in the independent sphere to which they are to be translated ; but while undergoing it, they are every moment welding the links of their own destiny in the chains of habit which they may now make or break at pleasure, and which will then bind them fast forever. This is the true philosophy of life, and solves its deepest riddles. If, according to the dream of some, God should, by a sovereign and arbitrary—rather we should say miraculous—exercise of almighty power, change the moral condition of the lost, without their own concurrence, and thus fit them for the mansions of light,<sup>1</sup> they would not really be themselves at all, but other beings, for the act is tantamount to the double absurdity of

<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes unthinkingly said that the startling changes, and especially the penal prospects, of the other world, will work a reformation in the character of the wicked. But did the divine chastisements have this effect in the present life? When was suffering, apart from grace, ever known to work moral improvement? Those who invent this vain hope forget that there is to be no new revelation, nor would it be effectual. Luke xvi, 31. Moreover, the discovery that the apprehensions of eternal punishment were a delusion would be little calculated to work a reformation. The Romish fable of purgatory is a weak device.

extinction and recreation. Nor is this all: God would, on that hypothesis, be obliged not only to blot out their past consciousness, but also to substitute for it an imaginary one as the basis of future blessedness—a pious fraud, indeed, as a passport to heaven! Such an act, moreover, would be an anomaly in his treatment of moral agents. He might much better do the thing now than wait till all the mischief of life is effected. To stay the soul with a hope like this is to rest upon worse than nothing. We may be assured God will not, cannot, so stultify himself.

In the light of the foregoing discussion we are forced to exclaim, How dread the responsibility of the present life as a sure omen of the unending? This is, indeed, its chief significance. The great work here, whether we will or nill, is preparation for the beyond; and we have only to choose if it shall be for weal or woe. Here the clay is molded which the furnace of the judgment-day will fix in imperishable form. The mutations of this transient state must give place to the permanent finality, when all will be changeless as God himself. The brief respite of the fallen angels, who are now permitted, as on parole, to walk the earth, will then also have expired, and they will be immured forever in the cells of doom, in company only with their human victims—a life-long term in lieu of capital extinction. But we may not pause to survey this awful scene, nor even to homilize upon its lessons; we linger only to drop some concluding reflections calculated to obviate any remaining sense of discrepancy between it and the divine benignity.

The pious mind is apt to imagine that a knowledge of the lost estate of friends will mar the bliss of heaven. But this, if true, is no valid objection to the doctrine of everlasting perdition. The joys of the celestial world will certainly be mingled with the recollection of numerous sorrows and sins ; yet these, by contrast, will rather enhance the glory of the final relief. Even here parents often mourn over the fall of loved ones, but it does not disturb their peace in God, if already settled ; it only drives them closer to his embrace. Perhaps, like David, who fasted and prayed with bitter self-reproach while the child lay in the uncertainties of disease, they will then dry their tears when the agony of supplication ceases with the death-throes of the object of concern.<sup>1</sup> The crisis will forever have passed, and anxiety will be over. That regrets will be experienced by the blessed cannot be avoided, seeing that they must ever lament their own misimprovement in part of the privileges of probation ; but there are various considerations which tend to soften these sad reflections, like the dimness of distance and the haze of a summer landscape. We must bear in mind the very considerable change of social sentiment and surroundings that will have come over the beatified when they contemplate the full outcome of the plan of salvation, and especially must be remembered the decay of the personal relations there which are so prominent here, but which will be merged in the grander, wider, higher associations of the eternal sphere. Even in this sublunary state

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xii, 15-23.

we learn to love the good more than our kindred of the flesh, and to prize the communion of saints above our chief joys ; but in the supernal world the dear friends we shall regain, the new acquaintances we shall form, and, most transporting thought, the personal companionship of Jesus, will more than make amends for whatever we may miss, and we shall cease to think with aught but commiseration of the lost. We shall feel that all has been done for their salvation that was consistently practicable, if not by ourselves, yet at least by the Lord, who alone can efficiently work in this direction ; and we shall acquiesce in their doom as self-inflicted despite the well wishes and warnings of their best friends. Nay, we will be aware that they will themselves accept their fate as amply deserved, and even as freely and deliberately chosen, or rather self-made ; and we shall know that, were this yet possible, they would not even then exchange it for the heavenly state, with all its conditions and employments. We shall, therefore, as now, be sorry rather for their infatuation than for its consequences. We have already anticipated that termination of their career, and the mind will have become adjusted to it. Moreover, we shall reflect, with a vividness now impossible, that the highest good of the universe is thus maintained, and the glory of God is preserved unsullied. We must not forget that other worlds, perhaps, and certainly angelic ranks, are eager spectators of this grand *denouement* of the redemptive scheme ; and that, like the apocalyptic elders and creatures, they will with one

consent bow in adoring rapture at the perfect equity and harmony of the issue.

We conclude, therefore, that the divine omnipotence and justice are both fully vindicated in the consignment of the wicked to everlasting misery, and that infinite benevolence itself could devise or wish no other destiny. We have seen that the good of all grades must applaud it as the only means of security and satisfaction for an injured Majesty, an outraged law, and an imperiled government. The bad themselves must confess it to be but the inevitable issue of violated conscience, debased powers, and misused privileges. Above all, the great Sovereign and Saviour, Father and Friend, who has exhausted every resource of the Godhead in order to avert the catastrophe, may reverently be said to sign with tears the death-warrant of the reprobate, as he wailed with unavailing grief over the fall of Tyre, Babylon, and Jerusalem: "If thou hadst known in thy day the things which belong unto thy peace! but even now are they hid from thine eyes." Divine compassion has reached its climax in the final doom.

THE END.



